

Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

By LOUIS BECKE and WALTER JEFFERY, Authors of *A First Fleet Family*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE 'ISLAND MAID.'

THE broad red streaks of the rising sun had just begun to pierce the misty, tropic haze of early dawn as a small white-painted schooner, of about one hundred tons burden, bore down from the eastward upon the densely wooded shores of Mayou Island, which lies in placid seas between the coast of south-west New Guinea and the murderous and fever-stricken Solomon Islands.

The white population of Mayou was not large, for it consisted only of an English missionary and his wife (who was, of course, a white woman); a German trader named Peter Schwartzkoff (whose wife was a Samoan woman); an English trader named Charlie Blount, with his two half-caste sons and three daughters; and an American trader and ex-boat-steerer of a whale-ship, named Nathaniel Burrowes, with his wives.

Although the island is of large extent and of exceeding fertility, the native population was, at the time of this story, comparatively small, numbering scarcely two thousand souls. The principal village was situated at the south-west end of the island, the rendezvous of the few trading-vessels from Australia that occasionally visited the place. Sometimes, however, a surveying vessel attached to the Australian station would call, and at longer intervals still a 'blackbirder,' or labour-recruiting schooner, from Fiji or the Navigators' Islands, would drop anchor off the village. At such times the monotony of the lives of the white residents of Mayou was pleasantly broken, for in the South Sea Islands generous hospitality to strangers is a ruling trait in the character of the isolated white men who have cast their lines in those lonely parts of the world. Once a year, too, a missionary vessel would drop anchor in the little reef-bound port nestling within a fringe of waving coco-palms

and sandy beach; but her visit was of moment only to the Rev. Mr Deighton, his wife, and their few native converts. The ship's presence in the harbour was scarcely noticed by the other white men, much to the sorrow of the good-hearted missionary. But by the average trader in the South Seas, from Pitcairn Island to the Carolines, a missionary ship is not regarded as a welcome visitor. He considers, rightly or wrongly, that his business suffers considerably by an institution known as the *Mé* (the May offering of the Christianised natives to the mission funds), by which some portion of the natives' produce in copra, pearl-shell, and ivory-nuts goes into the hold of the mission-ship, instead of sometimes into the traders' storehouses in liquidation of debts contracted long months beforehand.

Almost with the rising of the sun, the schooner had been sighted by a party of natives who were fishing off the south end of the island, and in a few minutes their loud cry reached other natives on shore, and by them was called from house to house along the beach, till it reached the thickly clustering dwellings of the town itself. And presently from a thousand throats came a deep, sonorous shout, '*Evaka! Evaka!*' ('A ship! a ship!'); and then the brown-skinned people swarmed out of their thatched dwellings like bees from their hive, and ran, laughing and shouting together, down to the beach in front of the village.

As the clamour increased, the Rev. Henry Deighton opened the door of his study and stepped out upon the shady veranda of the mission-house, which stood upon a gentle, palm-covered rise, about five hundred yards from the thickly clustering houses of the native village. He was a tall, thin man, with deep, earnest eyes, and his face wore a wearied, anxious expression, very different from the calm, dignified air so

generally seen on the features of clerical gentlemen in other places besides the South Sea Islands. His long, lean body, coarse, toil-worn hands, and shabby clothing indicated, too, that the lines of the Rev. Henry had not been cast in a pleasant place when he chose the wild, malarial island of Mayou as the field of his labours. But if he showed bodily traces of the hard, continuous toil of mind and body he had undergone during his seven years' residence among the savage denizens of Mayou, his eyes were still bright with the fire of that missionary spirit which animated the souls of such men as Moffat and Livingstone, and Patteson of Santa Cruz. For Henry Deighton believed in his work, and that he had been 'called' by the Almighty to that work; and so did his wife, a pretty, faded little woman of thirty, with a great yearning to save souls, and a greater yearning still to see once more a certain little village in Sussex, which for ever appeared in her dreams, and made her pillow wet of nights with home-hungering tears.

Standing on the veranda, the missionary shaded his eyes from the glare of the sun with his bronze-hued hands, and looked seaward at the advancing vessel. His wife followed him, and placed her hand on his shoulder.

'What ship is it, Harry? Surely it cannot be the *Glad Tidings*. She is not due till December.'

'No, Alice,' he answered, 'it certainly is not the *Glad Tidings*; and yet not a trading-vessel, I should think. She looks more like a yacht. Perhaps she may be a new man-of-war schooner from Sydney. However, we shall soon know. Put on your hat, my dear, and let us go down to the beach. Already Blount, Schwartzkoff, and Burrowes have gone, and it certainly would not do for me to remain in the background when the new-comers land.'

With her pale face flushing with gentle excitement at the prospect of meeting Europeans, Mrs Deighton retired to her room, and soon rejoined her husband, who, white umbrella in hand, awaited her at the gate.

The three traders were sitting on an upturned canoe on the beach when the missionary and his wife approached. Blount at once rose and shook hands with them; the American and German gave them a brief 'Good-morning.'

'Have you any idea of what vessel this is, Mr Blount?' asked the Rev. Henry. 'She certainly is a stranger.'

'None at all,' answered Blount; 'we were just wondering ourselves who she is. Doesn't look like a trader; she's more like a gunboat.'

Meantime the schooner had worked her way in through the passage between the reef, and, surrounded by a fleet of canoes, soon brought up and anchored. Her sails were very quickly handled; then, almost as soon as she swung to

her anchor, a smart white-painted boat was lowered from the starboard quarter, and the people on shore saw the crew haul her up to the gangway ladder.

Presently a white man, who by his dress was an officer of the ship, followed by another person in a light tweed suit and straw hat, entered the boat, which then shoved off, and was headed for the shore. As she approached nearer, the traders and the missionary could see that the crew were light-skinned natives of Eastern Polynesia; they were dressed in blue dungaree jumpers, white duck pants, and straw hats. The officer—who steered with a steer-oar—wore a 'brass-bound' cap and brass-buttoned jacket, and every now and then turned to speak to the man in the tweed suit, who leaned back in the stern-sheets, smoking a cigar.

'She's a yacht, I believe,' said Blount, who had been keenly watching the approaching boat; and then, turning to Mrs Deighton, he said, with a laugh, 'I'm off, Mrs Deighton. I don't want to be bothered with people of this sort. I know them too well—had a lot of experience of them when I was trading for Godeffroy's in Samoa and Tahiti—glorified drapers or Australian cow-merchants (otherwise called squatters) from Sydney, who ask, "Have you—ah—got good shooting—heah?" and wear coats with many pockets;' and turning on his heel, he raised his hat to Mrs Deighton, nodded to the other white men, and sauntered along the beach towards his house.

'I guess Blount's kinder set agin meetin' people like these,' said Burrowes, nodding in the direction of the boat, and addressing himself to Mr and Mrs Deighton; 'reckons they might be some all-powerful British swells he chawed off the same plug with when he was one himself. Guess sich mighty people don't skeer me much—not a cent's worth.'

'Id vas brober dad he should veel so,' remarked the German. 'If some German shentlemans vas to come here und zee me dressed like zom dirty zailor mans, den I, too, would get me home to mein house.'

'My friends,' said Mr Deighton, speaking reproachfully, yet secretly pleased at Blount's departure, 'no man need feel ashamed at meeting his countrymen on account of his poverty of attire. I am sure that the sight of an English gentleman is a very welcome one to Mrs Deighton and myself, and that we need be under no fear of having our clothing criticised by one.'

'Wal,' said Burrowes, with easy but not offensive familiarity, 'I guess, parson, thet you and Mrs Deighton had better form yourselves inter a committee of welcome, and interdooce me and Dutchy here to these British dukes or whatever they air. I reckon I ain't much in the speechifyin' line myself, neither is Dutchy'—nodding

at his stolid-faced companion—‘and you can sling in somethin’ ornymantal ’bout me bein’ the representative of the United States—a gentleman a-recrootin’ of his health in the South Sea Islands.’

By this time the boat was close to, and in another minute her bows ploughed into the white beach, and the straw-hatted, tweed-suited gentleman in the stern jumped lightly out. Taking off his hat with a graceful circular sweep, which included every one in the little group before him, he said with languid politeness :

‘Good-day, madam and gentlemen. I scarcely hoped to have had the pleasure of meeting Europeans in this place, and certainly never imagined that that pleasure would be enhanced by the presence of a lady, whom, I doubt not, is a countrywoman;’ and he bowed again to Mrs Deighton, who stood a little apart from the others.

‘I am pleased to meet you, sir,’ said the missionary, shaking hands with the new-comer. ‘You are welcome, sir; very welcome to Mayou, and to anything that it lies in our power to furnish you with for your schooner—or, I should say, yacht, for such, by her handsome appearance, I presume she is.’

The visitor, who was a handsome, fair-haired man, with a blonde moustache and blue eyes, bowed and smiled his thanks, and then said sweetly, ‘May I introduce myself? My name is De Vere.’

‘And I am the Rev. Henry Deighton, missionary-in-charge of Mayou; and this is Mrs Deighton. My two’—he hesitated a little at ‘friends,’ and slurred it over softly—‘my two friends here are Mr Peter Schwartzkoff and Mr Nathaniel Burrowes.’

‘Delighted to meet you, gentlemen,’ said Mr De Vere, first bowing to the lady, and then extending a white, shapely hand to the men. ‘I shall be very glad indeed, Mr Deighton, to avail myself of your kind offer. We are in want of water, and anything in the way of vegetables and poultry that we can get. We met with very bad weather coming through the southern portion of the Solomon Group, and the little live-stock we had was washed overboard; in fact, we shall have to repair damages to our bulwarks here.’

‘Might I inquire, mister,’ asked Burrowes, ‘if your vessel is a trader, or jist a pleasure-schooner, as the parson here says?’

‘Mr Deighton is quite correct,’ said Mr De Vere, with another graceful bow; ‘the *Island Maid* is a yacht. I can quite understand your not being able to make her out at first. She was originally built for the navy as a surveying vessel, but was sold in Sydney after a few years’ service. I bought her, and had her altered into a yacht, to cruise among these delightful islands. My friend, the Honourable Mr Morecombe-Lycett, accompanies me. Our English yachting experience had much to do with our determination to make our present cruise. In fact’—and here Mr De Vere showed his white, even teeth in a smile, and stroked his drooping, blonde moustache—‘we left England with the intention of chartering a vessel in Sydney to visit the South Seas. Mr Morecombe-Lycett is, however, very unwell to-day, and so did not come on shore; but here am I, and I am very happy indeed to make your acquaintance.’ Then, turning towards the boat, and addressing the officer who still kept his seat, he said, ‘Come ashore for me at noon, Captain Sykes.’

BACTERIA IN HARNESS.

By J. B. C. KERSHAW.



AS a result of the investigations made during the last fifteen years relating to the connection between bacteria and specific diseases, and of the numerous discoveries in this new field of human knowledge, the majority of people to-day have entirely lost sight of the fact that there are useful micro-organisms in the world, and they are firm in their belief that all bacteria are harmful and exist solely to create and propagate disease.

There would undoubtedly be great relief in many minds if it could be announced on good authority that the conditions which favour the existence and reproduction of these minute organisms had ceased to be present on this earth, or that germ-life had suffered extermination by a natural process. The

life of many of the human race has become a burden to them since they heard of the close connection that exists between bacteria and disease. They realise in a most vivid manner that the food they eat, the water they drink, and even the very air they breathe are rarely free from these ‘pestilential microbes.’ Life as these nervous ones see it is a long-drawn-out conflict between the human unit and countless myriads of invisible but deadly enemies. The attack is delivered at every movement and at every step of the man’s path through life; and the end is foregone—the microbes invariably win, though their triumph may be long delayed. The writer knows of a distinguished scientist who is so overpowered by the thought of the constant danger to which he is exposed that his life is passed in a

state of nervous dread of infectious disease; and the calmness and serenity of mind which are generally characteristic of the true philosopher are entirely lost.

It is not the writer's purpose in this article to discuss the connection between these minute organisms and specific diseases; but it may be stated that the views to which expression has been given above are not supported by facts. There are undoubtedly immense numbers of these forms of bacteria which cause disease in existence in the world to-day; but types and forms which are perfectly harmless to human life are present in far greater numbers, and these are performing work which is absolutely essential for the continuance of the human race. The average man's danger from infectious disease is not greater, but less, than it was fifty years ago; for, now that the true cause of infection is known, it is possible to take a rational course in guarding against it. The real safeguard is to keep one's mind and body in a good condition of health. The tissues of the body when perfectly healthy are able to kill the disease germs that may find their way into it; and it is asserted by some biologists that the white corpuscles of the blood are the agents which perform this service for man. Safety, then, is to be found, not in fussy and abortive attempts to exterminate all the bacteria in the water we drink or the air we breathe, but in a state of physical health which will resist the attacks of the comparatively small numbers of disease bacteria which we may meet in our daily life.

Turning now to a consideration of that much larger number of micro-organisms which perform useful service in the world, it is the writer's intention in the present article to give some account of the operations of these, and of the manner in which man has called them to his aid in certain of the industries which he carries on, and in dealing with one of the problems of modern life. Man has, in fact, learned how to control these microscopic germs, and he has harnessed them, with the great forces of Nature, to the car of his social and industrial progress.

The scientific name for the minute forms of life which are popularly known as bacteria, microbes, or germs is *Schizomycetes*. These organisms occupy in the biological classification of living forms the border-line between vegetable and animal life; and biologically considered they are minute vegetable organisms allied to the algae but devoid of chlorophyll. They are found everywhere when the necessary conditions for their life exist. These conditions are heat, moisture, and organic matter. We thus see that the desire of some people to live in a world where no micro-organisms are to be found could only be realised by migration to the arctic regions or to the moon. Little was known of bacteria until the latter half of the present century, because the microscopes in use were not sufficiently powerful to distinguish

one form from another. When we find that they vary in length from $\frac{1}{1000}$ to $\frac{1}{2000}$ of an inch, this fact is not very surprising. According to Pearmain and Moor, when seen under the highest microscopic power, they are little larger than dots of ink on paper; while a man of average height seen under the same magnification would be higher than Mont Blanc. They multiply by fission so rapidly under favourable conditions that, according to Cohn, one bacteria in twenty-four hours becomes the primary parent of sixteen and a half millions. Luckily for man, this rapidity of reproduction is checked under normal conditions by failure of the food-supply. That man has learned not only to recognise different varieties of these minute organisms, but to control and regulate their operations, is certainly not the least of his achievements during the present century.

BACTERIA THE CHIEF AGENTS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF ALCOHOL.

Sugar when subjected to the action of a minute organism known biologically as *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (its more humble name is yeast) splits up into alcohol and carbonic acid gas. This change can only occur within certain limits of temperature—a fact well known to those housewives who still make their own bread. *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, like many of his human brethren, is lazy and lethargic in the cold; and it is only when comfortably warm that his peculiar activities become manifest. The use of this organism for producing carbonic acid in dough, and thereby causing the bread to 'rise,' is, however, a comparatively unimportant branch of his life's work. The greater number of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* in existence to-day are to be found in breweries, and in the fermenting vats of the wine districts of Europe and Australia. In these two wine-growing industries countless millions of these micro-organisms are engaged converting malt and grape-sugar into alcohol; and the manufacture of beer and of wines would undergo a revolutionary change if, from any cause, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* were no longer available for this purpose.

BACTERIA THE CHIEF AGENTS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF VINEGAR.

Vinegar is obtained by the oxidation of alcohol. If the alcohol has been obtained by fermentation of malt-sugar, the product is known as malt-vinegar. When grape-sugar is used we obtain wine-vinegar. This oxidation, or substitution of one atom of oxygen for two atoms of hydrogen in the molecule of alcohol, can be carried out chemically in many ways in the laboratory. On a manufacturing scale, however, such methods would be very costly; and bacteria again come to man's aid, and provide him with a certain and simple means for effecting

the desired change. The organism used for this purpose is known as *Mycoderma aceti*. The manufacture of vinegar is most expeditiously carried on in large vessels filled with deal shavings, and kept at a temperature of thirty-six degrees to forty degrees centigrade. These shavings become in course of time covered with colonies of *Mycoderma aceti*, and the alcohol which is passed over the shavings is, by the agency of these micro-organisms, converted into acetic acid or vinegar. Only malt-vinegar is made in this country.

BACTERIA AS THE SCAVENGERS OF THE EARTH.

We now come to the most important and most useful forms of the bacteria with which the earth is crowded. These micro-organisms are the minute scavengers of creation. They are continually at work, wherever dead organic matter is to be found, breaking up the complex chemical compounds which it contains, and restoring to Dame Nature the raw material of her manufactory. The forms of bacteria which we have hitherto been discussing are only partial in their work; they carry oxidation up to a certain point, and leave an organic molecule of still fairly complex structure. Those which we are now considering are more thorough in their activity; and they convert the nitrogen, carbon, and hydrogen of the most complex organic compounds into nitrates, carbonic acid, and water. Bury any organic substance in the ground; in a few days or weeks it will be resolved into its elements by the activity of these minute germs. Even rags similarly buried will completely disappear. The micro-organisms which produce these changes are broadly classed as *aërobic* and *anaërobic* germs. The former require light and oxygen for the exercise of their activities, and are found in great numbers in the upper layers of the soil. The latter work chiefly in the absence of these conditions, and are therefore found deeper down where neither light nor air can penetrate. It is these two classes of micro-organisms that render life possible on this earth to-day.

Vegetable forms of life have been engaged for many thousands of years in building up complex bodies which are known as cellulose and protoplasm from the inorganic materials presented to them in the air and soil. The animal world in its turn feeds on this vegetable matter, and converts the protoplasm and other compounds which it finds in the plant into flesh, bone, and muscle. Had there been no counter-process at work in the world, all the oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon would have been long ago locked up in animal or vegetable forms, and life would have become extinct because these necessary elements of physical life were missing. The great work of breaking up the complex organic compounds that form the physical frame of vegetable and animal

life has been entrusted to those minute organisms which we are now discussing; and it is to them that we owe it that, after life has existed upon this earth for many thousands of years, and after millions upon millions of living forms have occupied its surface, there is still practically a virgin earth at Nature's command, and, instead of a perfect charnel-house of dead remains, we find a world as fresh and sweet as it was thousands of years ago.

But, while man has known for many years that these *aërobic* and *anaërobic* germs were Nature's scavengers, he has not known how to call them to his assistance in dealing with certain forms of organic matter; and it is only within the last five years that practical steps have been taken to utilise these micro-organisms for the solution of the greatest problem of the present day. The disposal and treatment of the drainage and refuse of our great cities and towns has engaged the attention of sanitary engineers for years. Probably no subject has called forth such a fruitless expenditure of energy and money. After fifty years of effort, not one of the methods of treatment tried up to the year 1890 has proved absolutely successful. The idea that bacteria might be called to man's aid in dealing with this problem first found expression in certain reports made by Dr Sorby, Professor Dupré, and Mr Dibdin in the years 1884-90. The Massachusetts Board of Health then carried out some experimental trials in the United States; and quite recently applications of this method of treatment upon a practical scale have occurred in this country, and have been surprisingly successful. The *aërobic* or the *anaërobic* types of micro-organism seem equally efficient for the attainment of the desired end—the production of a clear and harmless effluent from the liquid containing both solid and liquid organic matters which flows from the city drains. The method of treatment is simple in the extreme. In the one case a large pit is excavated and covered in. The whole of the drainage of the town is then allowed to flow slowly through it. If the temperature be favourable, *anaërobic* germs multiply in enormous numbers in this pit, and so active do they become that in twenty-four hours all the solid organic matters have undergone liquefaction, nitrogen compounds have been converted into nitrates, and a clear and innocuous effluent can be obtained by merely filtering the overflow from this pit through an ordinary filter-bed. Exeter, Sutton, and other places are already using these 'septic tanks' with most satisfactory results.

The activity of the *aërobic* germs is utilised by forming a suitable *habitat* for them in filter-beds made with large-sized pieces of coke. The drainage is passed through these intermittently, since it is found that it is necessary to allow air to enter all the interstices of the bed

periodically, in order to maintain the bacteria which are present at their highest level of efficiency. A recently patented form of bacterial filter-bed may, however, be worked continuously. As in the case of the septic tank, these filter-beds only yield their best results when kept within fairly narrow limits of temperature. Bacterial filters have been tried at Radley, Epsom, Claybury, Accrington, and Leeds during the last two years, and in every case success has attended their use.

Micro-organisms are thus about to become man's efficient servants for the solution of one of the greatest problems of modern civilised life. It may be pointed out that this newest method of treatment is the direct opposite of that which has been hitherto used. The sanitary engineer's efforts in the past were directed towards preventing bacterial decomposition of town drainage; they are now to be directed towards expediting it. Under the old methods of treatment it was customary to add chemicals with the very aim of killing or rendering inoperative the micro-organisms which were known to be present. Under the

new system, the aim is to supply the conditions (heat, &c.) favourable to the rapid increase of the micro-organisms, and to the highest efficiency of their destructive activities. By the older method of treatment, the ultimate decomposition of the organic matter was postponed but not avoided; and somewhere, in the estuaries of rivers or farther out at sea, it was occurring with the usual unpleasant accompaniment. By the new method, the work of decomposition will be carried to completion in a few hours, in localities which man selects as the most suitable; and so rapidly and efficiently will the work be performed that its objectionable characteristics will be entirely eliminated.

As already stated, many towns have already initiated this new method of treatment, with most successful results; and the writer has little doubt that in the coming century these colonies of bacteria working in the service of man, and completely under his control, will be as common a feature of city life as the town fire-brigade and the city police force of the present day.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER XXVII.



HE horror which greeted the announcement that a man-o'-war had made its appearance upon the horizon may be better imagined than described.

'By heaven, we have been trapped!' cried MacAndrew as he ran out of the smoking-room in Browne's wake, and gazed out to sea.

They formed a small group in front of the door: Browne, MacAndrew, Maas, Jimmy Foote, the captain, and the chief-engineer. Day was scarcely born, yet the small black spot upon the horizon could be plainly descried by every one of the party, and was momentarily growing larger. Without doubt it was a man-o'-war. What was more to the point, she was coming up at a good rate of speed. The position was an eminently serious one, and what those on board the yacht had to decide was what should be done.

'If she's a Russian, we're in no end of a hole,' said MacAndrew; 'and, when you come to think of it, she's scarcely likely to belong to any other nationality.'

'Let us come into the smoking-room and talk it over,' said Browne; and as he spoke, he led the way into the room he mentioned. Once inside, they seated themselves, and fell to discussing the situation.

'We'll presume, for the sake of argument, that she is Russian,' said Browne. 'Now what is to be done? Mr Mc'Cartney,' he added, turning to the chief-engineer, 'what was the cause of the breakdown in your department?'

'A bit of foul play, if I know anything about such things,' replied the other. 'Early this morning, or last night, somebody removed the main crosshead-pin of the high-pressure engine.'

'With what result?' inquired Browne.

'That we're as helpless as a log, sir,' replied the chief-engineer. 'Until it has been replaced it would be useless for us to attempt to get any steam out of her.'

'But surely you have some duplicate pins,' said Browne a little testily. 'Why not put one in, and then let us get ahead again without further loss of time?'

'For the simple reason, sir, that all the duplicates have been taken too,' the old man replied. 'Whoever worked the plot must have the run of the ship at his fingers' ends. I only wish I could lay my hands upon him, that's all. I'd make him smart, or my name's not Mc'Cartney.'

'Surely such an important point can easily be ascertained,' said Maas. 'Will you leave it to me to make inquiries?'

'Oh, don't you trouble,' said Browne. 'I

shall sift the matter myself later on.' As he said this he noticed that Jimmy Foote had not entered the smoking-room with them. In an idle sort of a way he wondered at his absence.

'How long will it take you to repair the damage, do you think?' Browne inquired of the chief-engineer.

'Well, sir, it all depends upon circumstances,' said that officer. 'If we find the duplicate pins we can do it in less than an hour; if we cannot, it may take us twelve hours, and it may take us twenty-four.'

'And how long do you think it will be before that boat comes up?' said Browne, turning to the captain.

'Oh, a good hour at least, sir,' the captain replied. 'She has seen us; and I'm afraid it would be of no use our even thinking of trying to get away from her.'

'But how do you know that she wants us?' Browne inquired. 'Being aware of our own guilt, we naturally presume she knows it too. As Shakespeare says, "Conscience makes cowards of us all." I don't think there can be very much doubt but that she's after us,' said Browne lugubriously. 'Her appearance at such a time is rather too much of a coincidence. Well, Mr McCarney, you'd better get to work as soon as possible. In the meantime, Captain Mason, keep your eye on yonder vessel, and let me know how she progresses. We,' he continued, turning to MacAndrew and Maas, 'must endeavour to find some place in which to hide Monsieur Petrovitch, should the commanding officer take it into his head to send a boat to search the ship.'

The captain and the engineer rose and left the room; and when the door had closed behind them the others sat down to the consideration of the problem which Browne had placed before them. It was knotty in more points than one. If, as Browne had the best of reasons for supposing, the warship was in search of them, they would hunt the yacht from stem to stern, from truck to keelson, before they would be satisfied that the man they wanted was not on board. To allow him to be found would be the most disastrous thing that could possibly happen to all of them. But the question that had to be settled was where he could be hidden with any reasonable chance of safety. They had barely an hour in which to make up their minds on this point and to stow the fugitive away before the man-o'-war's boat would arrive. In vain they ransacked their brains. Every hiding-place they hit upon seemed to have some disadvantage.

'The only place I can think of,' said Maas, who was lolling in a corner smoking a cigarette, 'would be in one of these lockers. He might manage to crouch in it, and they would scarcely think of looking for him there.'

'It would be one of the first they would try,' said MacAndrew scornfully. 'No, Mr Browne; the only spot I can think of is in the tunnel of the tail shaft. We might squeeze him in there, and I could go with him to take care that he makes no noise.'

'The very idea,' Browne replied. 'There's plenty of room, and no one would ever suspect his presence there. If you will take charge of him, and get him down there at once, I will go off and see Miss Petrovitch, and tell her what has happened, and what we intend to do.'

'And is there nothing I can do to help?' Maas inquired, raising himself to a sitting posture.

'Oh yes,' said Browne. 'You can keep your eye on the warship, and warn us when she gets too close to be pleasant. By the way, I must confess I should like to know where Jimmy Foote is. It's not like him to be out of the way when there's trouble in the wind.'

Without waiting for a reply, he ran down the companion-ladder and made his way along the saloon in the direction of Katherine's cabin. On reaching it he rapped upon the panel of the door, and bade Katherine dress as quickly as possible, and come to him in the saloon. The girl must have gathered from his voice that something very serious had occurred, for it was not long before she made her appearance with a scared look upon her face.

'What has happened?' she asked. 'I can see something is the matter. Please tell me everything.'

'Something very unpleasant,' Browne replied. 'In the first place, some evilly-disposed person has tampered with the engines so that we cannot go ahead for the present; but, worse than that, a man-o'-war—presumably a Russian—has come up over the horizon, and is steaming towards us.'

'A Russian man-o'-war?' she cried, with a look of terror in her eyes. 'Do you mean that she has come after us?'

'I cannot speak positively, of course,' said Browne, 'but since she is here, it looks very much like it.'

'Oh Jack, Jack,' she cried excitedly, 'what did I tell you at the beginning? This is all my fault. I told you I should bring trouble and disgrace upon you. Now my words have come true.'

'You have done nothing of the kind,' Browne replied. 'There is treachery aboard, otherwise this would never have happened.'

Afterwards, when he came to think it all over, it struck Browne as a remarkable fact that on this occasion her first thought was not for her father, as was her usual custom, but for himself. What did this mean? Had she been disappointed

in her parent, as he had half-expected she would be? Her quick womanly intuition must have told her what was passing in his mind, for her face suddenly flushed scarlet, and, clenching her hands together, she said slowly and deliberately, as if the question were being wrung from her, and she were repeating something she had no desire to say:

'But if it is a Russian man-o'-war, what will become of my poor father?'

'We are going to hide him,' said Browne. 'MacAndrew has taken him below to a certain place where he will be quite safe. He will remain there while the ship is in sight, and rejoin us when she has disappeared again. Believe me, dear, they shall not get him, whatever they may do.'

There was a little pause, and then Katherine said, as if she were following up the conversation:

'It would be too cruel if he were to be captured, just as he has got away.'

'He shall not be captured; never fear,' said Browne. 'And now, dear, you had better go and tell Madame Bernstein all that has happened. I think you had better both remain in your cabins

for the present. When the Russian officer arrives, if all turns out as I am very much afraid it will, I will ask you to dress and come on deck, for they will ask to be allowed to search your cabins for a certainty.'

'I will go to madame at once,' she answered; 'but I think'—

She was about to say more when a footstep sounded upon the companion-ladder, and a moment later Jimmy Foote, his face surcharged with excitement, looked down upon them.

'For heaven's sake, Browne,' he cried as he held on to the brass hand-rail, 'come up to the smoking-room at once! There is not a moment to lose.'

'What on earth has happened?' Browne inquired as he left Katherine's side and bounded up the ladder.

'Just what I suspected,' said Jimmy. 'I never could have believed such villainy could be possible.'

Having reached the deck, they hastened towards the smoking-room. As he did so Browne glanced out to sea, and noticed that the man-o'-war was now so close that her hull could plainly be distinguished. At most she could not be more than eight or nine miles away.

A PORTUGUESE SEASIDE RESORT.

THE formality and etiquette of the Portuguese Court is as rigid as that of the Spanish—for nine or ten months of the year at least; and the sojourner at Lisbon rarely sees the king and queen except in semi-state. But when the Court moves to the seaside, and takes up its residence in the village of Cascaes, everything is changed, and the royal couple and their children delight in a freedom that is astonishing in its contrast.

Cascaes originally was nothing more than a big fort, built on a small promontory near the mouth of the Tagus, yet far enough to be outside the 'sphere of influence' of its yellow flood, charged with the waste of the City of the Seven Hills. It was only accessible by a rough mule-track along the coast; and, when modern guns demonstrated, even to the sleepy Portuguese, the uselessness of thick stone walls as a means of defence, its isolated position was thought just the thing for a prison; a prison it was made, and it answered its purpose admirably. In course of time a few fishermen built their huts and cottages on the shore of the little bay, not a hundred yards wide, that nestled under the protection of the headland, and beached their boats on the strip of sand that fringed it, and thus formed the nucleus of what is now the most fashionable watering-place in Portugal.

It was Dom Louis, father of the present king,

who, struck by the health of the prisoners and the coolness of their prison in the summer, promptly turned them out, and set to work to modernise the interior of the building. He built himself a long, low, unpretentious kind of bungalow along one side of the great inside square of the fort, turning the warders', officers', and soldiers' quarters into accommodation for his suite and servants. Here, to this humble abode, he delighted to retire during the hot months, and amuse himself as he listed. But the queen, Maria Pia, did not care for it, and Cascaes knew her not.

Of course, fashionable Lisbon was not going to be left out, and very soon every available bit of ground within sight of the fort was built upon; but nobody dreamed of buying up the fishermen, and so their huts and cottages remained; and thus you find the place a jumble of magnificent villas and dirty hovels, plastered about regardless of plan or surroundings, wherever a level spot can be found to build on.

In Portugal, as elsewhere, the enterprising, if impecunious, scion of nobility exists, ready to turn an honest penny if he can; hence it was not long before a certain count formed a little syndicate, and bought a most lovely property about a mile along the coast, which he proceeded to lay out in French fashion, after the style of Nice or Cannes or any of the Riviera resorts. He built chalets, villas, and magnificent houses,

laid on water and electric light, installed up-to-date baths, hotels, and a casino, not to mention lovely gardens and lawn-tennis courts. He brought the railway from Lisbon, and turned out his property dazzling with pines, mimosa, roses, and eucalyptus; in fact, he made a perfect paradise of it; but, alas! it was not Cascaes; rough, dirty, rocky Cascaes was under the royal eye. Estoril, the new place, though quite close, could not be seen from the fort. Thus the *crème de la crème* would have none of it, but preferred to huddle up anyhow in a royal atmosphere; and the count's venture had to put up with wealthy bankers and tradesmen. But perhaps it was better for the company, as these worthy folks paid their rents, a little transaction often overlooked by their betters. However, Cascaes benefited in so far as the railway was continued past Estoril up to its doors; but there improvements ended. Gas or electric lighting was scorned, water was scarce, and sanitation was unknown.

Although every available house and lodging is snapped up early in the year, the place is empty until the end of July, when the Court comes; then everything is bustle and animation. I am writing now of the present king and queen, Dom Carlos and Donna Amelie, the latter a sister of the Duke of Orleans. Simplicity is the order of the day. Most of the grand carriages and high steppers are left behind, brakes, dog-carts, mules and rope-harness taking their place. Even the servants' liveries—the newest, I should say—are put away, and old weather-beaten ones, the silver lace worn and tarnished, take their place.

At Cascaes everybody who is anybody gets up at five o'clock, and—in flannels of every shade and style, white linen coats and frocks, and such-like easy and airy garments—wanders down to the little sandy bay to bathe. Here the arrangements are very primitive. Little flimsy cotton tents, too small for an average Englishman to stand up or turn about in, are pitched anyhow in a compact mass; they are nearly transparent, and collapse at a puff of wind or an incautious foot treading on a guy-rope. Their discomfort is intense; yet, although several Frenchmen have tried to get a concession to put up bathing-cabins, to be removed in winter, they are always refused, and things go on in the old happy way. However, the gaiety of the bathers is in no way affected by the wretched accommodation. Everybody knows everybody, and the chatter and laughter is incessant. The royalties bathe with everybody else, splashing and skylarking in the water without restraint with their subjects; and all the world seems to enjoy the early dip amazingly.

At Estoril you may see the garments of Trouville and Dieppe; but at Cascaes the old-fashioned long blue serge shapeless garment of our ancestors is *de rigueur*. By seven all is over, the beach

deserted and the tents struck, and the good folk betake themselves home to breakfast, and then, with closed sun-blinds, sleep away the heat of the day. At least this is the prevalent idea; but, should you get a peep behind the jealously-closed green shutters, I fancy you might see many a merry card-party, in light and airy costume, in the cool and shady north rooms, ice-drinks being much in evidence. Your 'Portuguese' is an inveterate gambler, dice being his chosen method. During these playing-hours of sunshine the place is, to all appearance, dead; a stray dog or an English tourist the sole living thing that may venture out.

About five o'clock in the afternoon the human ant-heap wakes, and the one drive, a level stretch of road along the top of the cliffs to the north, extending about a mile, and catching every stray breath from the Atlantic, is crowded. But the morning's simplicity has changed, at least as far as the ladies are concerned. The latest Parisian creations dazzle the eye; even the men, while still sporting flannels and white ducks, have them cut in the latest fashion, and the ties must be seen to be believed. A Portuguese swell devotes his whole attention to his linen and his tie; both are beautiful to behold. But, alas that I have to write it! fine feathers do not in this case make fine birds. The Portuguese are ugly—very. Of all the well-dressed crowd of under-sized, sallow-faced people, the queen stands out a brilliant exception, as she skilfully guides her four-in-hand through the throng, a tall commanding figure, acknowledging her subjects' salutes with dignified sweetness. She is not Portuguese. The king, with a straw hat on his nose, and a most enormous cigar protruding from under it—he has these specially made—drives a pair, with an aide-de-camp beside him; but his brother, Dom Affonso, tears along full pelt, driving four huge black mules in a high brake, with rope harness and many bells and red tassels. He stands up on the box flogging them mercilessly with a short-handled, long-lashed stock-whip, now and again rapping out weird swear-words at those who do not get out of his way fast enough. It is not one of the most edifying sights of Cascaes.

Just before seven o'clock all the carriages are pulled up close to the palace; their occupants get out, and everybody stands about in groups, gossiping and shaking hands, on a long terrace that overhangs the sea and catches the setting sun full. The king talks confidentially to his friends, and everybody who has the right kisses the queen's hand; and at seven all disperse to dress for dinner.

At nine o'clock the military band that plays during the royal dinner comes out into the big yard of the fort and plays there; and then anybody who likes—fishermen, townspeople, tourists, and all—are admitted over the drawbridge and

through the big gates, and crowd and jostle and perspire to their hearts' content, while the royal party looks down and grins at them from the breezy heights of the battlements. This is called *peccé frito*, or 'fried fish,' and it expresses the idea exactly.

The king loves sport of every kind, and may be seen by those who know when and where to look, now and then, unattended, and clad as a simple fisherman, blue jersey and bare-legged, spearing grey mullet, as they swiftly slip past in the clear water, from the rocky ledges that stretch towards Cape Roca. I once met him thus, without any idea of his identity; but this is neither here nor there.

Sometimes the young bloods elect to give an amateur bull-fight, and capital fun it is, without a trace of cruelty. A wooden ring is built—a small edition of a real stone bull-ring; and the show takes place exactly as a real one, with this exception: instead of fierce bulls, young heifers are used, their budding horns well covered at the points with big balls of leather and india-rubber. The gallant amateurs get tossed and knocked down freely, to the huge delight of their friends; but, beyond a few bruises, they are none the

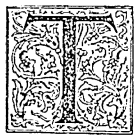
worse, seemingly. The evening before the fight takes place the animals are driven from the farm out in the country where they have been collected, through the village to the pens at the bull-ring. They are hustled through at full speed by the *jeunesse dorée*, mounted on ponies and armed with blunt-ended lances, the king leading. As they tear down the streets women scream, children fall flat, and men laugh and shout, and everybody is happy, for bull-fighting is as dear to the Portuguese as to the Spaniards, although it lacks the ghastly horse and bull killing of the latter. The Portuguese dislike blood and cruelty, and their bull-fights are most interesting exhibitions of skill and agility.

The queen-mother, Maria Pia, lives in a splendid villa between Estoril and Cascaes; but she never joins in these high jinks. She does not approve of such relaxation of Court etiquette, and is never seen except driving in semi-state almost, with four horses, postillions, and outriders, all immaculately got up and correct to the smallest detail. She is universally popular, especially with the humbler classes, and she does much good in an unostentatious way. She is a sister of the King of Italy.

THE FALL OF SEBASTOPOL: THE 8TH OF SEPTEMBER 1855.

A SUBALTERN'S REMINISCENCE.

By Captain I. S. A. HERFORD, Author of *Stirring Times under Canvas*.



THE final attack on the Crimean stronghold had been decided upon, the allies were as ready as they could ever be, and the winter was coming on. So for a month, in preparation for the final blow, a *feu d'enfer*, as the French well expressed it, was kept up, the Russians in Sebastopol losing, it is understood, a thousand men a day. On their part the defenders knew that the attack could not be well delayed, and they could not be very doubtful of the issue, particularly as their strongest position had been seriously imperilled by the French having taken and occupied the Mamelon in front of it.

Originally, in the division of labour, to the French had been assigned the left attack. The English had all the right; but, considering the great extent of this right, with the small amount of English troops available, it had been decided that the French, having a much larger force, should occupy it also, and the English hold the centre, with the Great Redan facing them. Thus the Malakhoff, which was on the proper left of the Russians' position, fell to the French. It had been early recognised that this Malakhoff fort was the key of the position, and the seizers would

then have the glory of deciding the fate of Sebastopol; but our army could not possibly undertake more than it could perform.

It is not necessary to say much about the two armies. Not having had any fighting in Europe for some time, our superior officers were Peninsular veterans. Rather than be put in command of armies afresh, they should have been allowed to rest in their homes and wear their well-earned laurels. The regimental officers were very good, and the men under them were models of endurance and pluck. On the French side, Pélissier, 'The Butcher,' as his countrymen called him, who knew what he wanted, and did not hesitate to do it at whatever cost, commanded. His infantry of the line was not worth much, but the Zouaves were excellent. 'We will go into action together with any of your regiments with the utmost confidence,' they would observe to us; '*mais pour ces poltrons là*'—(pointing to the red-trousered gentry); we will only say that the words used were not complimentary.

My regiment, the 90th, formed part of the light division, and had its left on the Woronzoff road. I had only joined a few days before the end of the siege from the dépôt in Ireland. Thus I all but escaped the fatigues and worries

of trench-work. I had come in for one of the finest artillery duels ever known; the rapidity with which discharge followed discharge, and the crushing noise attendant on them, with the exploding of the shells, formed a very grand effect.

Numbers of accounts have been written anent the Crimean war, but hitherto no detailed description has appeared relative to service in 'the trenches.' Civilians, especially, imagined that, after Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann, to have served only in the trenches was to have escaped all the fighting, whereas this service had the severest and hardest work during the war. In this the second and light divisions shared alike. I am speaking of the right attack, on which the brunt of the daily fighting fell.

During December 1854 to February 1855 the tour of duty of the guards of the trenches lasted twelve hours, and that of the pickets twenty-four, to say nothing of trudging between the camp and the trenches, often in the dark, in the earlier part of the winter, with the discomfort of rain above and mud beneath, to be followed later by snow and frost—occupying not infrequently two hours in the loathsome transit. The men who came off duty rarely had more than twelve hours' rest before they were again on duty and in the trenches, a service so wearing that numbers, if they did not actually succumb as they were returning to camp, were found dead in their tents, or sank lifeless when parading for further duty.

In the spring of 1855 the hours of duty in the trenches came up to twenty-four at a time, the tour of duty coming round every third day. Reinforcements having arrived from England, the trench-works were extended, and became more so daily, resulting in an increasingly large number of casualties, which, towards the end of the siege, rose to some eighty in number. Indeed, in June and up to 8th September parts of the trenches were veritable slaughter-yards.

The work of our men in the trenches involved four actions during the siege—repulse of attacks on our rifle-pits and trenches in March 1855; our capture of the Quarries on the 7th of June, the attack on the Redan on the 18th of June and again on the 8th of September. Of officers killed and wounded in these four operations there were eighteen, sixty, ninety, and one hundred and forty-seven respectively; while of the rank and file there were upwards of four thousand, taking them together, exclusive of daily siege casualties.

The daily guards of the trenches of the second and light divisions (right attack), after parading at dusk, marched down to the middle ravine which separated our twenty-one gun battery from the first parallel of the trenches occupied by the French, where regularly we would find long and deep open graves ready to be filled up, as they invariably were, with the bodies of those of our allies killed in the ensuing twenty-four hours.

These, and the numerous mounds on the side of the ravine, were regarded with gruesome interest by our troops going to and coming from the trenches, suggestive as they were of what might be their fate in a very short time.

Often during the siege, when, from information received through our spies, a general attack was expected, the guards of trenches were ordered to stand fast—that is, serve forty-eight hours instead of twenty-four. So it was also on the 7th of September, when our attack was being prepared, and in consequence the Russians might venture to be beforehand with us.

'You were certainly very lucky to have known so little of the days before the fall,' observed an old brother-officer to me the other day. He had been twice wounded as one of the stormers of the Redan. 'I can never forget the horrors of the trench-work and scenes. Like others, I had often pools of blood round me, limbs scattered about, &c.; and renewing the experience, too, every third day. One day, the 8th of June, in the Quarries, my servant Farrel, as he was taking my breakfast, which he had brought from camp, out of his haversack, was struck in the mouth with a bullet, which went down his throat and inside him. He fell down on me, deluging me with blood, and expired. I did not eat any breakfast on that day.'

Camp life at night could hardly be described as halcyon; during the last three months of the siege hardly any rest was attainable, for nearly every night, on hearing a continued rattle of musketry for more than a certain time—occasional volleys or gun-firing were not paid attention to—the alarm and 'assembly' would be sounded. This happened usually between midnight and 2 A.M., and we remained under arms until daylight. Those who came off duty at 8 P.M. had but a short night, for it was impossible to sleep in the daytime owing to the myriads of flies infesting the camp.

The evening of the 7th of September came. It was getting dark, when all the officers of the regiment were summoned to the mess-hut. By the light of a lantern the senior officer read a Division Order just issued. In it we were told that the labours of many months were to bear fruit; that it was only a question of hours; that the city was now ready for a final assault, which would be made the next day. The Left Brigade of the Light Division were to have the high honour of storming the Great Redan, while the French would attack the Malakhoff at the same time. The 90th and 97th were to furnish 'ladder,' 'storming,' and 'working' parties. Of the twenty officers present, the greater part were given by name to the storming and ladder parties in nearly equal proportions. The ladder party were to pick up the ladders, which they would find ready in the advanced trench, in order to carry them across the open space—a

little more than two hundred yards—then lower them down in the ditch, and then raise them on the other side of it, so as to allow the stormers to mount up and pass into the work, our artillery having battered down something of the salient angle. I breathlessly waited for my name to be called out. The ladder party and the stormers were now complete; there remained the working party. To it Captain Perryn was assigned in command, with Lieutenant Rous under him; then I was added.

I made some remark of disappointment. 'Oh ho! you are not satisfied?' called out some one to me. 'You would like one of the other parties? Have no fear, you will have your bellyful of shot and shell, youngster—more than the others perhaps, for the enemy will be fools if they do not try to stop your work sharp.' It may not be generally known that the working party is intended, when a position is seized, to throw up entrenchments, so as to hold it and keep the enemy out.

We then left the hut. My own captain (Preston) said, 'So we are not to be together after all; but I will see that you are all right;' for my baggage had not yet come up from Balaklava. 'Your tent is next to mine, and you will feed with me. Perhaps you will give me a few minutes to myself now.' He sent for a cousin of his, handed him his keys, and gave him minute directions in case of certain eventualities. All the evening he was most kind, but very grave and thoughtful; and I have no doubt that he did not expect to survive the morrow.

In the early morning all the men had been distributed. I do not remember the numbers; there was not one company which could show anything like half its usual strength. The hospital had been weeded, and only one officer was left behind to take charge of the camp, he being too sick for work. A good supper was to await our return, and we marched off laden with ammunition and water.

The ball had commenced. Our batteries were busy keeping down the fire of the enemy, who naturally did not view with equanimity the streams of troops descending to the trenches. Our progress was very slow, the route being designedly tortuous. Passing behind and around the front of the Sailors' Battery, a gun was fired just over my head. I was enveloped by the smoke, and reeled from the concussion, but I was able to get on. This explosion gave me something to remember Sebastopol by; for, two years afterwards, on having become deaf with the right ear, I consulted a surgeon. On poking about the ear he found something black. 'Hallo! why, this is gunpowder!' But I never recovered my hearing, even when my ear was cleared.

After many turns and twists my party arrived at the place where we had to await events, the

trench there having been widened. Here we had to huddle together. The noise was terrific. I looked around—'vit-vit-vit,' 'p-i-n-g,' sang the bullets; 'sh' came the grape; crash and smash went the shells, with the 'r-r-r-r' of their pieces flying about. My curiosity had to be moderated; unseen foes were striking down my companions.

All eyes were turned towards the French on our right. They were attacking the Malakhoff from the Mamelon—a mound which the Russians ought never to have allowed an enemy to seize and make use of. The Malakhoff was an enclosed work, and if taken, it could thus more easily be held against the Russians themselves. Everything had been done by them to make the approaches difficult, the ground being honeycombed with mines, which were fired under the advancing French, whole regiments of whom went up into the air, the dense columns of smoke continually being renewed. Pélissier sent on his men without intermission, and by force of numbers and assurance the defenders were overcome and the place was gained.

In our direct front was the Redan, an open work, the ground of which sloped towards the town, with a deep ravine protecting the left of it. In order to seize this most important position and take off some of the attention of the enemy, our men were despatched to take and occupy the Redan. The attack was nothing more nor less than a feint. How the stormers and their 'supports' succeeded in entering the Redan at the salient angle, driving back the Russians and holding the place for three-quarters of an hour, fighting for their own right hands, and no one to command or direct them, with, from some hitherto unexplained cause, no reserves to succour the gallant little band; how the Redan garrison, reinforced by the Russians, who found they could not retake the Malakhoff, at last drove out our men, who had to regain the trenches, I will not dwell upon. I will only mention what does not seem to be generally known, and what certainly was not provided for by our engineers at the time—if they were aware of it at all—namely, that the attacking party found themselves in face of a barrier eight or nine feet high running across the Redan, effectually hemming them in.

Our party had meanwhile been quiescent. We were now to be of use. In order to draw off the fire from our retreating men, the Engineer officers ordered out the working parties: 'Over, and continue the sap.' Now, sapping is a work usually done at night, when the enemy cannot see what is done in order to get nearer him, by digging a trench, and using the earth and stones displaced so as to raise a bank on the side of the enemy. To do this effectually and make a solid embankment, gabions—large baskets which are bottomless—are placed on end side by side

and filled with earth; then long bundles of twigs, called fascines, are laid horizontally on the gabions, while earth is thrown outside these so as to slope outwards. On our way we had to go along the advanced trench, which was crowded with the troops who had been driven in. Among these I recognised one of our captains. He was leaning against the bank. 'Good heavens, Close, you are badly hit!' 'Oh no, I am all right.' 'But your head!' His face was covered with brains, which seemed to be protruding from under his hair. It was another man's brains that I saw. Well, we set to work under the Engineers as if nothing had happened, filling our gabions and putting them in their places. This had the desired effect, and the enemy, thinking that we were adding insult to injury, turned their pieces in our direction, thus allowing the poor fellows who were obliged to lag behind to make more effort and regain friendly shelter. Many of our own men were hit. My captain and the senior subaltern had early been knocked over by grape-shot, so that I was in command of the party.

Presently the Engineers, not seeing any more necessity for our services, ordered us back into the trenches. The firing on each side now gradually ceased. Both sides were exhausted, and were giving their attention to the wounded and killed. Leaving a sufficient number of men to guard the works, we sadly and wearily made our way to camp, passing the surgeons in their shelters. They were busily plying their craft, and relieving their patients in various ways. On our way back we met the Highland Brigade, which was going down to the trenches to renew the attack next morning, the authorities not knowing what effect the taking of the Malakhoff would have on the Russians.

There were very few to eat the supper provided for us—not more than four or five, I think. We were now able to realise our losses—three officers killed, one missing, twelve wounded, and four not touched; and I was one of the four. When in my tent I slept like a top all night. The next morning my servant, a theatrical sort of a fellow, burst into the tent: 'Sir! sir! get up; the Russians have evacuated, and Sebastopol is in flames!' Yes, from all the south side of Sebastopol proper ascended large columns of smoke, with buildings blazing in all directions, and on the right one could descry the bridge of boats over which the Russians had all night been quietly passing their men to the north side of the harbour, under the shelter of their fortifications there, which were all intact; and now, their object being effected, they were breaking the bridge up and floating the pieces away.

While I was gazing at the scene a sergeant came up. 'I have orders, sir, for you to go to the Redan and bury the dead.' So, with a party armed with shovels, I started across

country; and what had taken more than half-an-hour the day before to gain we reached in ten minutes. A clergyman in his surplice read the burial-service from the top of the Redan. Then the bodies of the Russians and the English were brought together from all around and laid side by side in the ditch, any bodies of officers or non-commissioned officers being sent to their regiments, and the parapet was levelled upon friend and foe; but not before our soldiers had critically examined each Russian's boots. If these were good, in a trice they would be stripped off the Muscovite and changed wearers, for they were much better and more durable than those of our manufacture.

The going about the Russian works was attended with some danger; for, though our engineers had been busy cutting connections of mines with the voltaic batteries of the defenders—I now possess two bits of copper wire covered by gutta-percha which had been thus used—they might have overlooked some. Among loose powder the Russians had dropped about fougasses, which were small glass phials that, on being trodden upon and broken, liberated a certain acid and caused mines to explode. Indeed, all day and later, small explosions were going on, many men losing their lives thereby.

A cordon of soldiers was drawn around the burning town; but this did not stop the French, who penetrated everywhere, and looted right and left. That day or the next a Zouave appeared in our camp, which was the first he arrived at after leaving Sebastopol, with a reliquary which he had found. It was about the size of a glove-box; the top and sides were of malachite, heavily set and ornamented with gold, and inside were the relics of some saint. The man wanted three hundred francs for his find. It was well worth the money; but there was not one of us who had twelve golden sovereigns ready, so he went off to some other camp. If the Russians saw any officers or body of men exposed they would send a shell after them from the north side; otherwise all was very quiet.

Our captain was not accounted for until the second day after the fall of the place, when, penetrating into some low huts near the dockyard on hearing a noise, it was found that the place was full of dead and wounded Russians. These, thinking that we were going to kill them, tried to hide under their beds, and one man with a musket endeavoured to fire at us. At the end of the hut a bit of red was noted, and there was our missing captain, Herbert Vaughan. Poor fellow! he was delirious almost all the time, having been severely wounded, and without food and water; but in lucid intervals when in camp he told us his story. He had been bayoneted by a Russian, and had fallen into the ditch, breaking his leg; and when a soldier was going to shoot him as he lay, Vaughan, seeing an officer behind

the man, made him a 'masonic sign, which was understood. The man's musket was knocked up, and the astonished fellow, with another soldier, was made to lift up Vaughan and take him to a place of safety. Here a surgeon appeared. He would return, he said, in two hours, to take off the injured limb. But the Russians had too much to do, the doctor never came, and Vaughan was carried into the hut and forgotten, as were all his fellow-sufferers. He did not long survive his transfer to the camp, although there he received every attention. Of the three other officers that we lost, I am grieved to say that Captain Preston was one.

For many days I was continually going out with a party to read the burial-service over some one. When the deceased was a Roman Catholic I always took some soldier of the same faith to read the service over him. The constant

repetition of the 'Dead March in Saul' was found so depressing to the wounded that it was forbidden to be played. Gradually those of us who were injured were sent home, and the camp resumed its wonted look.

As we have said, the French having won what had long been known as the key of the position, Sebastopol had fallen. The British attack had not been a success—a result not unexpected. It had served its purpose, although it had been terribly mismanaged. It was not till ten days after the fall, on a mail coming in, that we learnt of a 'Hero of the Redan,' when the *Times* introduced us to him. There were many heroes that day no doubt, for without any head or any order, company officers and their men fought long, until they were driven out of the work. All honour to these undistinguished ones.

OUR WEIGHTS AND MEASURES: HOW THEY ARE KEPT ACCURATE.

By W. L. MANSON.



THE grocer who weighs out a pound of sugar, or the draper who reels off a yard of cotton, rarely asks himself how the pound-weight or the yard-stick are kept accurate; and still less does the purchaser of goods remember how all the standards, from the lowest to the highest, continue true from year to year and from decade to decade. The general public hardly ever wonder how it is that the local inspector of weights and measures can always tell if a pound of sugar is not a pound or a yard of cotton not a yard. His word is law, and the question, 'How do we know that the inspector's standards are right?' is never asked. We assume good-naturedly that his weights and measures always remain infallible—impervious to the action of the atmosphere and the knocks and rubs of everyday life. But it is evident that if each inspector were left to keep his standards as he pleased, they would—slowly maybe, but surely—become inaccurate; and a pound or a yard in one place would not then be a pound or a yard in another, neither would any pound or yard be the true weight or length. What, then, keeps the inspectors' standards right? and how do we know that our weights and measures are not all going to sixes and sevens, or becoming gradually lighter and shorter? This article is designed to answer these questions.

Each inspector is in duty bound to visit every shop within his jurisdiction at least once a year; and it is the duty of each trader, at the risk of incurring the pains and penalties of the law, to see that his weights and measures are kept in proper

order, and to send them to the inspector for adjustment whenever he has any doubt as to their accuracy. The inspector keeps in his office a set of standards, perhaps several sets; and by comparison with these he corrects the faulty measures he may discover, or that may be submitted to him. His standards are kept right by comparison—the measures of weight at least once in five years, and the measures of length at least once in ten years—with the Board of Trade standards in London. Sometimes, on the application of local authorities, the Board of Trade sends officers to a convenient centre; and these officers, after duly establishing a temporary Board of Trade office, proceed to deal with all local standards submitted to them. Such an office was set up in Glasgow at the beginning of September last; and the standards of a large number of Scottish cities, burghs, and counties were adjusted and verified. Those authorities whose standards were not due for adjustment did not require to send theirs in; but several, in order to avoid the expense and loss of time entailed by sending them to London, perhaps next year, took advantage of the opportunity to have all their standards adjusted and verified.

The Board of Trade standards regulate all the weights and measures of the home country, the colonies, and several foreign countries. These standards are themselves derived from one Imperial Yard-measure and one Imperial Pound-weight, which are preserved with a care that could hardly be excelled were the constitution of the Empire at stake. The yard and the pound weight—which are designated the 'Im-

perial Standards,' are kept at the Standards Office, Old Palace Yard, Westminster; and, in addition to the Imperial Standards, four 'Parliamentary Copies' of each have been provided for by legislative enactment. These are deposited as follows: one pair at the Royal Mint; one with the Royal Society of London; one in the Royal Observatory, Greenwich; and one pair have, for absolute safety, been built into the wall of the New Palace, Westminster, in a staircase off the lobby in which visitors to the House of Commons wait their turn to be admitted to the public gallery. It is not considered necessary to preserve the standard of capacity, which is a gallon measure in the keeping of the Board of Trade, with equal care, as it can be recovered at any time from the Standard Pound—ten pounds of distilled water at sixty-two degrees Fahrenheit, when the barometer stands at 30 inches, being exactly one gallon.

The Imperial Standard Yard is derived from a solid bar of gun-metal 38 inches long and 1 inch square. Near each end a round hole is sunk to the depth of half-an-inch, the distance between the two centres being 36 inches. In each hole a gold pin is inserted. This pin is one-tenth of an inch in diameter, and on its surface three fine lines are cut, separate about one-hundredth part of an inch, and transverse to the bar. Two similar lines are cut across the pin, and parallel to the bar, and the measure of the Imperial Yard is the distance between the middle transverse line on one pin and the middle transverse line on the other, the part of each line chosen being the point midway between the longitudinal lines—that is, the exact centre of the gold pin. The composition of this yard-measure is: copper, 16 oz.; tin, $2\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; zinc, 1 oz. It was cast in 1845 by Messrs Troughton & Simms, London; and it is absolutely accurate at a temperature of sixty-two degrees Fahrenheit. The Imperial Pound is of iridio-platinum, cylindrical in shape, nearly 1.35 inch in height and 1.15 inch in diameter, with a groove round it, about .34 inch from the top. This groove is intended to afford a hold to the ivory fork with which the Imperial Standard Pound is always lifted. The Parliamentary Copies are exactly similar to the Imperial Standards, except that there are marks to distinguish the different sets. The standards used at Glasgow last September were duplicates of the Imperial Standards, so that the weights and measures actually used by traders are only three removed from the bits of metal which regulate all the weights and measures of the Empire. There is, first, the Imperial Standards; second, the duplicates and the working duplicates, which for all practical purposes are the same, as they are compared every time the officers leave Westminster or begin the work of verification; third, the inspectors' standards; and then, of course, the measures used in shops. In the case of the working-man's pint of beer,

the retail measure is only two removed, as the officers' working standards are compared direct with the Imperial Gallon.

We have now traced the accuracy of the measures used in everyday work right up to the Imperial Standard Yard-measure and Pound-weight. But is there not a danger of the Imperial Standards themselves getting lost or becoming gradually shorter and lighter? There is; but the precautions taken are such that this danger is practically non-existent. The present Imperial Standards and Parliamentary Copies were constructed in 1844-45, the previous Standards having been destroyed by fire on 16th October 1834. These previous Standards were constructed in 1758-60, and in July 1891 eight of them—four measures of length and four of weight—were found by workmen in the House of Commons. They were so much injured that they were useless as standards; but they had been recognised by Parliament so late as 1824; and although the newer Standards had replaced them, and, theoretically, they had no existence (the law had stated they were lost, and before their recovery could be admitted an Act of Parliament would have had to be repealed), there was room for much quibbling had any one been so inclined. However, it was decided, after serious consideration, that they were of no legal authority, and the new measures continued to be the Imperial Standards, and to be preserved as such. The Standards, Imperial and Parliamentary Copies, are never touched by the naked hand—the perspiration or heat might create a chemical action which would render them inaccurate—and all repose in specially prepared boxes, the keys of which are kept by the most responsible officials. Once in ten years the Parliamentary Copies of the yard, and once in five years those of the pound, excepting those immured at Westminster, are brought together at the Board of Trade Offices, and compared, literally with microscopic care, with the Imperial Standards; and once in twenty years the Copies are compared with the Imperial Standards, and the Imperial Standards with the Copies immured at Westminster. It is in this once-in-twenty-years comparison that the utility of the Copies buried in the wall comes in.

The length of time which elapses between comparisons, and the many important issues which depend on the ceremony, invest it with a dignity and interest of no ordinary kind. On the appointed day the several officers interested meet on the staircase where the remaining set of Copies is immured. The Warden of the Standards is there with the Imperial Standards in his custody; and, after due formalities, a workman is called in, who breaks open the wall, and discloses a cavity, inside of which is found a rough wooden box. Inside this there is another box, this time of metal, soldered air-and-water-tight. The metal box is broken open, and one of mahogany is found. The lid of this

is fixed with keyed screws, and sealed above each screw. This mahogany box contains the Yard-measure carefully wrapped in chemically prepared paper, and a silver-gilt box containing the Pound-weight, also wrapped in specially prepared paper. The yard rests on rollers, placed under it in such a way as to prevent flexure of the bar, and facilitate its free expansion and contraction in variations of temperature. Every standard yard, at least when being compared, rests on similar rollers.

The comparisons are made on a table erected on the stair, the Yard-measure being verified by means of a special arrangement of microscopes. The Standard Pound is verified by being placed opposite the Parliamentary Copy on a specially constructed and very delicate balance. This balance is enclosed in a copper case, with a small door opposite each scale, and a small window opposite the dial which registers the difference between the weights. The copper case prevents anything outside from affecting the accuracy of the balance. The heat from a man's body, for instance, might expand one arm of the balance more than another and so render it inaccurate; but the copper, by distributing equally throughout the balance any atmospherical change that may take place, renders this impossible. When all is ready—the balance being 'out of gear'—the doors are opened, the weights lifted with ivory forks and placed on the scales, the doors shut, the balance put 'into gear,' and the difference, as registered on the dial, carefully noted. The work over, the Standards are replaced in their wrappings and boxes, screwed up and sealed, the wall rebuilt, to stand for another twenty years, and the result of the comparison is reported to Parliament. And, curiously enough, if any inaccuracy is found it is not rectified. Owing to its construction, the length of the Standard Yard could not be altered either way; but, in any case, neither the Imperial Standards nor the Parliamentary Copies are ever adjusted or corrected. Instead, the amount of the inaccuracy is noted and taken into account whenever a comparison is made from them. The last comparison with the immured copies was made in 1892, those present being Mr Chaney, Warden of the Standards, and his assistants; Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, President of the Board of Trade; Lady Lucy Hicks-Beach; Lord Peel, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Miss Peel; Sir H. G. Calcraft, Secretary of the Board of Trade; The Right Hon. D. Plunket, First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Works; Colonel W. Carrington, representing the Lord Great Chamberlain; and Mr Chisholm, late Warden of the Standards, who has been present at three such comparisons. It was found that the immured copies were not in any way destroyed, defaced, or injured, but were, to all intents and purposes, in the same condition as when they were reimmured in 1872, the date of the previous comparison. No

measurable change was found in the length of the Standard Yard; but the Standard Pound appeared to have lost 0.00230 grain since 1855, and the Board of Trade recommended that a new weight should be verified and legalised. As indicating the extremely exact nature of the operations, it may be mentioned that any difference approaching to one fourteen-millionth part of a pound or one twelve-thousandth part of a yard can be ascertained.

It is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. If by any possibility the Imperial Standards were lost or spoiled, they could be replaced by the verification and legalising of any pair of the Parliamentary Copies. But if—and this is a wild flight of the imagination indeed—our civilisation so far collapsed or our precautionary measures so far failed to serve their purpose that all our Standards were lost, they could not, technically speaking, be replaced. Learned men can, with the help of a pendulum and a watch, and by other means, construct a yard-measure that is as absolutely accurate as is necessary; but if the Standard did not exist they would have no means of proving that the two were the same length. However, circumstances that would make such an expedient necessary are fit material for the romancist of the wildly improbable rather than for the sober descriptive writer.

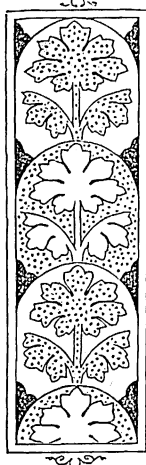
REMEMBERED BEST OF ALL.

WHEN I'm looking back across the time-worn pages
Of the book of years one face I always see,
Just one gentle face that alters not nor ages,
But seems now and evermore the same to me.
I can feel a loving hand in mine entwining,
When my faltering childish steps were fain to fall,
With its watchful eyes like stars upon me shining—
'Tis the face that I remember best of all!

When I look around, and memory is bringing
Back again the echoed songs of long ago,
Songs that ever down the halls of Time are ringing,
Songs that set my listening youthful heart aglow—
All the visions bright of years gone by they bring me,
And they seem to hold my spirit in their thrall,
But the simple air a dear voice used to sing me
Is the song that I remember best of all!

When I dream of all the gladness that has blest me,
And the sunshine that has made life's pathway bright,
When I long from all the toil of earth to rest me,
Till the dawning of the day that knows no night,
I remember all the love the years have taught me,
And the happiness that filled them I recall;
But a mother's love and all the joy it brought me
Is the love that I remember best of all!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

LORD ROSEBERY AS LITERARY CRITIC.

By J. F. HOGAN, M.P.



OMEBODY wrote a magazine article not long ago under the title of 'The Four Lord Roseberys;' and I have read a book about Lord Rosebery in which he was considered and discussed under six aspects: 'The Man,' 'The Radical,' 'The Municipalist,' 'The Home Ruler,' 'The Imperial Federationist,' and 'The Foreign Minister and Premier.' This enumeration would seem to exhaust all the possible standpoints from which Lord Rosebery might be regarded; yet there is another and a non-political rôle he has played which is certainly not the least interesting in his attractive and versatile career. As a writer of graceful, scholarly, and luminous prefaces, Lord Rosebery has no rival in these islands; but this is a character in which he appeals rather to the cultured few than the public in general, and consequently it is the one that is least familiar to the great body of his admirers.

Lord Rosebery's first preface is dated 'Government House, Melbourne, January 16, 1884.' It forms the introduction to the *Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume*. It was written when Lord Rosebery was industriously completing his education by that grand tour of the Empire which he has since declared should be an indispensable preliminary to the attainment of front-bench honours by any public man in this country. Lord Rosebery was for the time being the guest of the Governor of Victoria in the baronial pile that dominates Melbourne from the southern bank of the Yarra. During his stay in that city he sought out and substantially befriended the widow and children of perhaps the greatest of colonial novelists, Marcus Clarke, author of that most lurid and thrilling of romances of the transportation era: *For the Term of his Natural Life*.

Born in Kensington, the son of a London barrister and *littérateur* of some distinction, Marcus Clarke found his way to Australia in his seveneenth year, and spent two years on an up-

country sheep-station, where he closely observed the various types of bush character and collected the materials for the numerous and admirable short stories and sketches that subsequently flowed in quick succession from his facile pen. Migrating from the solitudes of the bush to the life and bustle of the city of Melbourne, he wrote largely in the local journals and magazines, besides acting as Australian correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph*. His work in this latter capacity so strongly impressed the proprietors of that journal that Sir Edward Lawson wrote: 'It has occurred to me that you possess most of the qualifications for journalism of the highest order. Would it suit your views to come to England? If the idea should have entered your mind, tell me what income you would require to entice you to come to London.' This was a brilliant offer to a young man in the early twenties at the other end of the earth; and what motive influenced Marcus Clarke in declining it is a mystery. It was the colossal mistake of his life. He also refused that snug sinecure, the Parliamentary librarianship in Melbourne, which would have assured him a handsome permanent income and left him ample leisure for the fulfilment of his literary projects and aspirations. He was a veritable latter-day Oliver Goldsmith in his utter inability to recognise what was best for his material interests. He married at twenty-one; and, after the ceremony, went out to look for lodgings for his bride, having quite overlooked that essential preliminary. Through the kind offices of his friend and patron, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, he eventually became sub-librarian of the Melbourne Public Library. But his Bohemian mode of life had seriously impaired his constitution, and the money-lenders of Melbourne, in whose toils he had become involved, helped to worry him into a premature grave at the early age of thirty-four. The whole of his literary activity was comprised between the years 1866 and 1881, and during that period he wrote three complete novels and one unfinished; up-

wards of fifty short stories and sketches; a dozen plays and pantomimes; and a vast quantity of leading articles, dramatic criticisms, and occasional contributions to journals and magazines. He was about to start on a cruise amongst the South Sea Islands as the special correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph* when he was seized with his fatal illness.

Marcus Clarke's *magnum opus*, *For the Term of his Natural Life*, which forms the theme of Lord Rosebery's preface, was the result of a commission from the proprietors of the *Australian Journal*, a monthly magazine that is still published in Melbourne. The present self-governing colony of Tasmania was during the first half of this century a penal settlement to which the criminals of Great Britain and Ireland were despatched in convict-ships. This 'transportation system,' as it was called, became associated with a variety of cruelties and horrors that are now embedded in blue-books or locked up in the secret manuscript archives of the Tasmanian Government. Marcus Clarke diligently mastered and assimilated all this melodramatic material, and weaved it into a romance that will never be eclipsed as a living picture of the transportation times. It is, of course, not to be taken as an accurate presentation of the facts and incidents of that era. What Marcus Clarke did was to collect, with an eye to thrilling dramatic effect, all the horrors and cruelties practised on scores of prisoners for half a century, and pile them all upon the back of his unfortunate, innocently convicted hero, Rufus Dawes. The result is a masterpiece of terrible fiction; but it should never be forgotten that Rufus Dawes was far from being the typical transported convict. Human tigers, as a certain proportion of these exiles were, had to be kept in subjection by harsh and even brutal methods; but the average sensible transported convict who behaved himself became an 'emancipist' in time, was allowed to take up land, married, amassed wealth, and founded a respectable family.

Lord Rosebery's preface to the *Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume*—a selection from the author's writings published by subscription for the benefit of the widow and children—is in the main a glowing eulogy of *His Natural Life*. He says his visit to Australia, always a floating dream of his, lost one great attraction by the absence of its author. 'Long ago,' he adds, 'I fell upon *His Natural Life* by accident, and read it not once or twice, but many times, at different periods. Since then I have frequently given away copies to men whose opinions I valued, and have always received from them the same opinion as to the extraordinary power of the book. There can, indeed, I think, be no two opinions as to the horrible fascination of the book. The reader who takes it up and gets beyond the prologue, though he cannot but be harrowed by the long agony of the story and the human anguish of every page,

is unable to lay it down; almost in spite of himself he has to read and to suffer to the bitter end. To me, I confess, it is the most terrible of all novels, more terrible than *Oliver Twist* or Victor Hugo's most startling effects, for the simple reason that it is more real. It has all the solemn ghastliness of truth.'

Lord Rosebery says he employed some of his leisure in Australia in studying the blue-books on which the novel was based; and while in Tasmania he made personal inquiries on the subject. The result was to carry conviction to his mind that the case had not been one whit overstated; nay, that the fact in some particulars was more frightful than the fiction. Alluding to the fact that the most appalling chapter in the book—the one that describes the escape and cannibalism of Gabbett—is a paraphrase of an appendix to the report of the House of Commons Committee on Transportation in 1837-8, Lord Rosebery uses this striking and suggestive sentence: 'The materials for great works of imagination lie all around us; but it is genius that selects and transposes them.'

Lord Rosebery concludes by expressing his regret that the works of Marcus Clarke were not sufficiently appreciated either in Australia or Great Britain; a reproach that has since been removed to a considerable extent. 'It is rare,' he adds, 'that so young a country has produced so great a literary force. I cannot believe but that the time must soon come when Australians will feel a melancholy pride in this true son of genius, and Australian genius. And in England, like another power in the world of letters, not dissimilar in genius—I mean Emily Brontë—he may have made up to him in posthumous honour what was lacking in his lifetime.'

Lord Rosebery's second preface is of topical interest just now, when in his character of progressive Imperialist, he is being regarded with peculiar interest both within and without the ranks of the Liberal party. He was the last President of the Imperial Federation League. An eloquent member of that vanished organisation, Mr G. R. Parkin, now the head of a Canadian college, made a speaking tour of the British dominions, and subsequently published a bright and instructive volume under the title of *Round the Empire*. In a clear and concise preface, dated London, February 1892, Lord Rosebery introduced it to the reading world, or rather the schools of the nation: 'I have been asked to write a line of introduction to this book, and gladly comply, as its primary purpose is to remind our children that they inhabit not an island, but an Empire. There are few political facts, perhaps none, that should exercise so great an influence on their future lives.' Proceeding to develop this thesis, Lord Rosebery argues that a collection of States spread over every region of the earth, but owning one head and one flag, is even more important as

an influence than as an Empire. From either point of view it is a world-wide fact of supreme significance; but in the one capacity it affects only its own subjects, and in the other all mankind. With the Empire statesmen are mainly concerned; in the influence every individual can and must have a part. Influence is based on character, and it is on the character of each child that grows into manhood within British limits that the future of the Empire rests. 'If we and they are narrow and selfish, averse to labour, impatient of necessary burdens, factious and self-indulgent; if we see in public affairs not our Empire but our country, not our country but our parish, and in our parish our house, the Empire is doomed. For its maintenance requires work and sacrifice and intelligence. If, on the other hand, we aim at the diffusion of the blessings of industry undisturbed by war, if we aim at peace, secured not by humiliation but preponderance, we need to preserve our Empire not for ourselves only but for mankind. And this is said not pharisaically, not to the exclusion of other countries, but because ours is the most widely spread and the most penetrating of nationalities. The time, indeed, cannot be far remote when the British Empire must, if it remain united, by the growth of its population and its ubiquitous dominion, exercise a controlling authority in the world. To that trust our sons are born.' On these grounds Lord Rosebery hopes that the youth of the race will learn how great is their inheritance and their responsibility; that those outside the British Isles may learn the splendour of their source and their home; and that English, Scottish, and Irish children may learn not to be shut in their shires, but that they are the heirs of great responsibilities and a vast inheritance. And he concludes with a serious warning to the Little Englanders: 'History has marked those that made this Empire, and will mark with equal certainty, but in a different spirit, those who unmake it or allow it to dissolve. In this book there is put forward no theory, no constitution, and no plan. Mr Parkin probably believes, as most of us do, that the security for national union lies not so much in parliamentary projects as in the just appreciation of imperial responsibility.'

A third exceedingly interesting preface by Lord Rosebery ushers in the eighth volume of the publications of the Scottish Historical Society. This volume is a contemporary list of persons concerned in what Lord Rosebery calls 'our last historical romance'—the Stuart rebellion of 1745—and it is printed from a manuscript in his possession. The twelve pages from Lord Rosebery's pen by which it is preceded are styled a preface, but they really constitute a succinct, graphic, and judicial essay on the final effort of the House of Stuart to regain the throne of

Great Britain and Ireland. Next to his *Life of Pitt*, this is Lord Rosebery's most considerable and important literary performance up to date. As a Meissonier-like war-picture in words, this opening passage of Lord Rosebery's essay on Bonnie Prince Charlie would be difficult to surpass: 'A hundred and forty-five years ago a French-born [rather Roman-born] prince of British origin leaves Belleisle and lands in the Western Highlands. He is alone with seven followers and a handful of *louis d'ors*; but his name, with its traditions, and his own gallant bearing, rally round him a few chiefs and their followers. He presses forward, followed by a ragged but terrible tail, disperses in five minutes regular troops, to whom his army are as Mohawks, and seizes Edinburgh. There he holds court in low-lying Holyrood, commanded by the Castle, which is garrisoned by his foes, and defeats in another burst another regular army. Thence, little stronger, he dashes into England as far as Derby. He spreads consternation throughout the kingdom, and strikes the very heart of the Empire. In London there is Black Friday; the realm seems at the mercy of a raid, and it seems the toss of a die whether England shall be Guelph or Stuart. Then the wild foe is mysteriously paralysed. The confused advance is followed by a precipitate retreat. The Highlanders hurry back with a dismal haste, downcast and draggled; farther and farther, past Glasgow, past Falkirk, till they are lost in the mists of the north, whence at last comes news that they have been crushed and harried and slaughtered, and that their leader has disappeared. Then ensues that famous flight of the romantic youth through the vague unknown country, pressed and pursued, in caves, in huts, in women's clothing; passing through penniless Highlanders with a reward on his head that meant wealth for a clan; but, faithfully served, escaping back to the Continent and to a long ignominy. He disappears for a decade, and emerges a changed man—bloated, drunken, half-imbecile, half-brute, and so he ends his life. Then, again, by a magic unconscious touch of history, he is transmuted for ever into a paladin, with a tradition and a worship which have always hallowed his smallest relics as of a hero or a saint.'

The fascination that clings to Prince Charlie is attributed by Lord Rosebery to the recklessness which, while being one of the most engaging qualities of private life, loses no part of its grace on a larger stage. Charles came alone, relying on his ancestral rights and his charm of manner. The throne he claimed for his father was occupied by an elderly German for whom no one felt enthusiasm or even liking or respect. Doubtless many who held aloof would not have grieved in their hearts had the spirited adventurer been successful. Lord Rosebery adds his belief that, in all probability, had Charles not retreated from

Derby, ten thousand Frenchmen would have attempted a descent upon southern England and changed the face of history. Moreover, a Jacobite army at the gates of London might have roused all those forces of disorder which afterwards showed themselves so potent. If Lord George Gordon could make the Metropolis tremble, the roughs that he afterwards utilised might have made Charles Edward a regent or a king. Lord Rosebery's conclusion is that the instinct of Charles was right to press onward from Derby, and that the rebellion represented a much more

serious danger than people sitting in their nineteenth-century arm-chairs and counting noses are apt to reckon.

The dark shadow of destiny, the long historical tragedy, give fascination to the Stuart story. 'It is the cause,' says Lord Rosebery, 'for which many thousands of brave men willingly faced exile and ruin and death, for which they were attainted and hanged and massacred; round which the sweetest poetry of Scotland has wound itself, and which the legends of the people embalm.'

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IT was a curious sight that met Browne's gaze when he entered the snug little cabin in which he and his friends had spent so many happy hours together. The skipper was standing near the door, Mc'Cartney was next to him, the second engineer in the corner opposite, and half-seated, half-forced down on the cushioned locker under the starboard port-hole was Maas, with MacAndrew, revolver in hand, leaning over him. Browne glanced from one to another of the group, but failed to take in the situation.

'What does this mean?' he cried, and as he did so he looked at Jimmy Foote, as if for explanation.

'It's a bad business, Browne, old chap,' Jimmy replied; 'a very bad business. I wish to goodness I had not to say anything to you about it. But it must be done, and there is very little time in which to do it. While you were away on shore a small incident occurred which aroused my suspicions. I determined to watch, and did so, with the result that they were confirmed. I saw that our friend Maas was a good deal more familiar with your officers and crew than I thought was good either for them or for himself. I did not know he was the traitorous cur he is.'

By this time Maas's usual sallow face was ashen pale. His lips seemed to be framing words which were never spoken.

'For Heaven's sake, Foote,' cried Browne, in an agony of impatience, 'get on with what you have to say! What have you discovered?'

Jimmy turned to the second engineer, who was almost as pale as Maas. 'Tell him everything,' he said; 'and see that you speak the truth.'

'I scarcely know how to tell you, sir,' the young fellow replied. 'I only wish I'd never lived to see this day. What made me do it I don't know; but he, Mr Maas there, got round me, sir, and—well, the long and short of it is, I gave in to him, and did what you know.'

'You mean, I suppose, that you and he between

you are responsible for this break-down in the engine-room this morning? Is this so?'

'Yes, sir,' the man replied.

'And, pray, what reason did Mr Maas give you for desiring you to do this?'

'He told me, sir,' the young man replied, 'that he had your interests at heart. He said he happened to know that if you had started for Japan at once, as you proposed, you would be running the yacht into a certain trap. He said that, though he had pleaded and argued with you in vain, you would not listen to him. You were bent on going on. The only way, he said, that he could stop you was for me to do what I did.'

'Surely, my dear Browne,' said Maas, speaking for the first time, 'you are not going to believe this cock-and-bull story, which is quite without corroboration. Your own common-sense should show you how absurd it is. What can have induced this man to trump-up this charge against me I cannot say. Our friendship, however, should be proof against it. Knowing the amount of worry you have upon your shoulders at the present time, I have no desire to add to it; at the same time, I cannot permit your servant here to insult me before your face.'

Browne took no notice of what he said. Turning to the engineer, he continued:

'How much did Mr Maas offer you, or what inducement did he bring to bear, to get you to do what you did?'

'He offered me five hundred pounds, sir,' the other returned. 'I told him, however, that I wouldn't take his money. You have been very good to me, sir, and I did not want to be paid for doing what I thought was a kindness to you. It wasn't until Mr Mc'Cartney told me about that cruiser having put in an appearance that I saw what I had been led into doing. Then I went straight to him and made a clean breast of everything.'

'It was the best course you could have pursued,' said Browne, 'and I shall remember it when I

come to deal with your case later on. In the meantime, gentlemen, what are we to do?’

As he spoke the second officer descended from the bridge and made his appearance at the cabin door.

‘The cruiser, sir, has signalled that she intends sending a boat,’ he reported, touching his cap.

‘Very good,’ said Browne; and when the officer had taken his departure he turned to Maas.

‘So it is as we suspected,’ he said, very slowly and deliberately. ‘While we have been trusting you with our secret, you have been playing the traitor all round. Maas, I can scarcely believe it. I did not think a man could fall so low. However, there is no time to talk of that now. Come, gentlemen, what are we to do?’

Ever since the second officer had announced that the man-o'-war was about to send a boat Maas had undergone a complete change. Though he had been found out, he still felt himself to be master of the situation; and with every minute's grace his pluck returned to him. Springing to his feet, he cried:

‘You ask what you should do, do you? Then I will tell you. You can do nothing at all. You are in my power, one and all. Remember that I represent the Russian Government, and if you attempt anything against my safety I shall place myself in the hands of the commander of the cruiser you can see over there. You must surely see that the game is hopeless, and that further resistance would be as foolish as it would be futile.’

‘Well, if anybody had told me’—Browne heard Jimmy remark; then MacAndrew struck in:

‘I think I take in the position,’ he said. ‘I have met with a similar case once before. Perhaps you would not mind leaving it in my hands, Mr Browne?’

‘What do you mean to do?’ inquired Browne.

‘I will very soon show you,’ said MacAndrew. ‘Perhaps Mr Foote will assist us?’

‘I will do anything you like to be even with him,’ said Jimmy vindictively.

‘That's the sort of talk,’ said MacAndrew. ‘Now let us make our way to his cabin. Mr Maas, I shall have to trouble you to accompany us.’

‘I'll do nothing of the sort,’ said Maas. ‘I decline to be left alone with you.’

‘I'm very much afraid you've no option,’ said MacAndrew calmly; and as he spoke he gave a little significant twist to the revolver he held in his hand. ‘Come, sir,’ he said, more sternly than he had yet spoken. ‘On to your feet, if you please. Remember you are playing with desperate men. If by hesitating you get into trouble, you will have only yourself to thank. Your friend, the cruiser, is still a couple of miles away, as you must be aware, and a revolver-shot would scarcely be heard as far.’

Seeing that there was nothing for it but to obey, Maas rose to his feet and passed out of the smoking-room, along the deck, and down the saloon companion-ladder to his own cabin. Once there, MacAndrew handed his revolver to Jimmy, with the request that he would be good enough to watch the prisoner during his absence, and to put a bullet through his skull if he should attempt to escape or give the alarm.

‘For my part,’ said MacAndrew, ‘I'm going to test the resources of Mr Browne's medicine-chest.’

Five minutes later he returned with an ounce or so of some dark fluid in a graduating-glass.

‘Good heavens! You're surely not going to poison him,’ said Browne; while Maas stared at the glass with frightened eyes.

‘Poison him?’ said MacAndrew coolly. ‘My dear fellow, is it likely I should do anything so absurd? No; I am simply going to place him in a position of safety, so that he cannot harm us during the time the warship is in sight. Now, Mr Maas, I shall have to trouble you to swallow this.’

‘I'll do nothing of the kind,’ said Maas sturdily. ‘You shall not persuade me to put my lips to it.’

‘In that case, I'm afraid there will very probably be trouble,’ said MacAndrew. ‘If I were you, sir, I should make up my mind to the inevitable. Remember there are unpleasant arguments we could bring to bear should you still remain obdurate.’

Maas gasped for breath. He looked right and left, as if for some loophole of escape, but could find none. He was surrounded on every side by inexorable faces, which gazed upon him without pity or remorse, while on the table before him stood the small glass half-full of the dark-coloured liquid.

‘Come, sir,’ said MacAndrew, ‘I shall be glad if you would toast us. Let me remind you that there is no time to lose. It always pains me, in cases like the present, to have to apply physical argument when moral might produce the same result. In the event of your not drinking, as I request, perhaps Mr Browne will be kind enough to permit us the use of his galley fire. The method, I admit, is barbarous; nevertheless it is occasionally effective.’

The perspiration rolled down Maas's cheeks. Bantering as MacAndrew's tones were, he could still see that he was in deadly earnest.

Browne glanced out of the port-hole, and noticed that the man-o'-war's boat had left its own vessel. In less than a quarter of an hour it would be alongside, and then—But he did not like to think of what would happen then.

‘I will give you one more minute in which to drink it,’ said MacAndrew, taking his watch from his pocket. ‘If you do not do so you must be prepared to take the consequences.’

Silence fell upon the group for a space, during which a man might perhaps have counted twenty.

'Half a minute,' said MacAndrew, and Browne's heart beat so violently that it almost choked him.

'Three-quarters of a minute,' continued MacAndrew. 'Mr Foote, would you mind giving me the revolver and standing by that door? I am afraid that we shall be driven into a tussle.'

Jimmy did as he was requested, and another pause ensued.

'Time's up,' said MacAndrew, shutting his watch with a click. 'Now we must act. Mr Browne, take his legs if you please.'

They moved towards their victim, who shrank into a corner.

'I give in!' he cried at last, affecting a calmness he was far from feeling. 'Since there is no other way out of it, I will do as you desire, provided you will give me your assurance that the stuff is harmless.'


'It is quite harmless,' said MacAndrew; and then, with an air of braggadocio that could be easily seen was assumed, Maas tossed off the decoction, and, having done so, seated himself on the settee. A quarter of an hour later he was in his bunk, fast asleep, and Jimmy was sitting by his side in the capacity of sick-nurse.

'You had better bear in mind the fact that he has been ill for the past week,' said MacAndrew before he left the cabin. 'He caught a chill through falling asleep on deck, and pneumonia has set in. Now I shall retire to join my friend in the tunnel, and leave you to your own devices. Don't forget to let me know, Mr Browne, as soon as the Russian has bidden you farewell.'

'You may depend on me,' Browne replied; and as he spoke the captain hailed him from the deck above, to inform him that the boat was coming alongside.

OCEAN GAMBLING.

By T. L.

OT many years ago gambling was carried on to such an extent on board Atlantic liners as to call for prohibitive action on the part of the various companies concerned.

Card-playing, not only in the smoking-rooms, but also in private cabins, was indulged in to a simply ruinous extent. Organised gangs of sharpers continually travelled back and forth between New York and Queens-town, and doubtless made a handsome living out of their profession, for profession it was, needing an expert handling of the cards, only to be gained by long and constant practice, a cool head, and quickness of perception in reading character. In consequence of the concerted action of the companies, high gambling apparently disappeared; the only practical results obtained, however, being surface ones, as passengers now, instead of openly throwing gold coins or notes on the table, use only silver or copper coins, these acting simply as counters, representing whatever value the players assume to them at the beginning of the game. 'Nap' and 'poker' are the two favourite games—the former for the younger men as a rule, the latter for the more seasoned heads; and play still goes on merrily, even though some one lands penniless in New York in consequence. An incident of which the writer was a witness may serve to explain the points of view of both sides of a gambling deal.

A young Englishman, on his first trip across the Atlantic, found himself gradually drawn into a game of 'poker' with three or four professional sharpers. The latter were most presentable in

their manners and dress, and older men than their victim might have been excused for playing with them. At first the young man won, as is usually the case; but gradually, as the steamer approached New York, he began to lose—winning at times, but losing on the day's play. When he lost it was usually by only one point. Tempted by what he called 'luck,' he plunged a bit; and one afternoon, only twelve hours from New York, he found himself penniless. He had only a few shillings left—barely enough for his tips—out of over one hundred pounds, his total capital! Slowly awakening to his losses, the poor young fool felt desperate. His father had with great difficulty given him this sum, together with an introduction to an old friend in the West. There he was, staring down at the littered card-table, ruined, disgraced, and penniless—a poor condition for a young man just starting out in the world. A quiet-looking man, who usually sat reading in a corner of the smoking-room, had tried once to give the young fellow a friendly hint to go slow. His advice was promptly and haughtily resented—as advice usually is when unasked for—and the quiet man said no more; but this afternoon, after watching the young man sitting alone, the picture of despair, he sat down beside him, and gradually, in a kindly, fatherly way, drew the whole story out. Telling him not to be too despondent, he went out on deck and joined a party of elderly men, who were leaning over the side watching the porpoises playing round the ship. Telling them in a few words the situation, he asked one—a Westerner—to act as spokesman, and the whole party then moved.

across the deck to the other side, where the sharpers were still laughing amongst themselves at the complete success they had had in 'cleaning out' the Britisher. The Western man, who did not believe in preliminaries, burst out with: 'You men have cleaned out that young man of every cent he has. I don't say you've swindled him, but I have my own opinion; and I think, and so do we all, that you ought to refund.' Naturally this was met by a storm of vituperative rejoinder, to the effect that the game was a square one, and if the other fellow had lost, all the worse for him. Then the quiet man stepped forward, and, looking hard at the leader of the gang, said, 'Joe, pay up;' and that was all he did say at the moment. The effect was magical. The sharper glared at him, then turned pale, and muttered, 'It's you, is it? Didn't know you.' 'No, didn't suppose you did. I've grown a beard since I saw you last. Now, pay up quietly, or'— 'All right,' was the quick response; 'I'll do what is fair.' With that he handed over a roll of notes with some gold to his evil genius, saying, 'There's ninety pounds. We got a hundred, but we've spent over ten on drinks and cards.' Needless to say, the young Englishman was delighted to get back so much of his money, vowing he would never touch a card again. It is to be hoped he kept his vow. The quiet-looking man was simply a good-natured, kindly detective, who knew the gang and its leader well, and they equally well knew him and feared him.

A certain portion of the steamer-sharks, who were also expert thieves and confidence-men, were outfitted and financed by a well-known person in Chicago called Canada Bill, who had a most presentable manner and appearance—his general tone that of a prosperous business man, which he certainly was. Not a railroad entering Chicago but had its appointed gangs for each train, with orders to fleece or steal all they could, whether by three-card monté, the box trick, poker, or any other method that was practical. They regularly reported to the 'Boss,' handing over all the plunder they had secured, for which they were promptly paid at the Boss's valuation. Cash was divided equally. Canada Bill in return looked after his men carefully. If ill or unable to work, they were attended to and supported. If arrested, his peculiar and intimate acquaintance with all the tricks of Chicago law, aided by a liberal expenditure in the way of bribery both of witnesses and police, usually succeeded in getting his man free. It may here be said that this man had a method of his own of checking his men's honesty (?) in reporting to him faithfully as to their takings. The men were afraid of him; again and again had he caught them making false declarations. How he found them out he only knew. The punishment was always the invariable one—

dismissal. Oddly as it may sound, this was considered by his employés a disgrace. There was an *esprit de corps* amongst them; they were proud to be under the Boss. Ostensibly a mining agent, he had his office neatly fitted up with the usual appliances for assay work, including a small furnace, generally alight, blowpipes, acids, crucibles, and so on. The stones were rapidly removed from all jewellery—for the man was an expert—and the gold thrown into the melting-pot, then cast into neat little ingots, which were sold to the branch Treasury Office close by by Canada Bill personally, he representing them as a fresh consignment from his Western mines.

On one occasion, recognising that certain rivals were disputing his territorial rights, he called on the superintendent of one of the leading roads entering Chicago, calmly offering him ten thousand dollars yearly if he (the superintendent) would give over the monopoly of 'working' all trains on the system operated by the railroad company. The cool assurance of the man rather upset the nerves of the superintendent, who, feeling unable to do justice to the subject, curtly declined the offer. As his visitor reluctantly moved to the door, he capped his first offer by adding, 'I will go one better: I will instruct my men to play against *ministers* only, and I agree to forfeit any reasonable sum if they break the contract.' Now, the superintendent was a religious man in his way—that is, so far as his duties permitted him; and, in amazement, he asked Canada Bill what he meant. The reply he received left him deeply thinking of a rather stiff donation his wife had insisted on his handing over to their own pastor a few days previously for the latter's summer holiday. 'When a minister gets on a train he always has a pocketful of money given him by his church for his summer holiday. Over ninety per cent. of them, according to our experience, are anxious to increase their capital; and when they see two or three innocent-looking old jays of farmers having a quiet little game, they *always* want to join in. A minister, mister, is always a dead-sure thing to us, every time.' Sore at his failure to secure a monopoly, he revenged himself on the superintendent by instructing some of his best men to keep on his track; and within a month they succeeded in abstracting his watch, chain, and well-lined pocket-book. The watch was a presentation one, and valuable. Canada Bill could not resist the temptation, so he forwarded the watch and chain to the owner, to the latter's great surprise and joy, together with a card on which was neatly written, 'With C. B.'s compliments.' As all good things come to an end, so did Canada Bill; he died full of years and cash. The police, during one of their spasmodic attempts at enforcing the law, arrested and convicted several members of the gang, who had no longer a

friend at court to protect them. Train-men had strict orders to stop all gambling they saw, and so the game no longer paid for the risk. I may add that the box-trick was an exceedingly clever one, requiring an expert proficiency in sleight-of-hand to be successful. An elaborately-carved wooden match-box, together with an apparently identical one (save that the latter was simply a solid block of wood), was the stock in hand. A confederate politely asked the match-box man for a light; the latter, after relighting his cigar,

handed the box closed to the applicant, who, after vainly attempting to open it, handed it back to the owner, laughingly saying, 'I suppose there is a secret spring. I certainly cannot open it.' 'Oh no!—it's simplicity itself;' again opening the box and striking a match, then again handing back the box—in reality, the solid block. This little pastime was, of course, only indulged in before a suitable assemblage of onlookers. Bets were made, excitement spread rapidly, and the box-trick flourished exceedingly.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER II.—A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.



FEW hours later De Vere was on very friendly terms with Mr and Mrs Deighton, who had carried him off to the mission-house after the boat had returned to the schooner. Before he accompanied

them, however, he told Burrowes and Schwartzkoff, as he shook hands, that he would not fail to visit them later on in the day at their respective houses; and both Peter and the American, who on any other occasion would have been highly indignant at any white visitor, not a missionary himself, foregoing even for a short time the pleasure of their society for that of a 'parson,' gave De Vere vigorous hand-grasps, and said that they would be proud to see him. Then they hurried off homewards.

Peter's house and trading-station lay midway between those of Charlie Blount's and the American's; but instead of making for his own place, Peter, to the surprise of Blount, who was standing at his door watching them, went inside Burrowes's house with its owner.

'That's curious, now,' said Blount in English to one of his half-caste daughters, a girl of eighteen. 'Those two fellows hate each other like poison, and I've never known the Dutchman go into the Yankee's house, or the Yankee into his, for the past two years, and they are now as thick as thieves. I wonder what infernal roguery they are up to.'

Charlie Blount's amazement was perfectly natural. The German and the American did dislike each other most intensely. Neither of them had lived so long on Mayou as Blount, but each was trying hard to work the other off the island by mutual accusations of cheating to the natives. As a matter of fact, they both cheated, and were both dangerous men, who would stick at nothing. Banderah, the head-chief of Mayou, who liked white men, managed to keep a hollow peace between the two men themselves, and between them and his own people, who disliked

them equally. He was perfectly well aware that the white men cheated his people and himself, but as long as their cheating was practised only moderately he did not mind. They were useful to him in many ways, especially in supplying him with arms and ammunition, which he loved dearly, and on this account alone he would have tolerated their presence on the island.

With Blount, however, he was on terms of absolute friendship, and his confidence in and good feeling towards him was shared with the savage chief by every one of his people.

Perhaps, had Blount been a witness of what occurred when the boat had landed, his previous suspicions of the character of his two fellow-traders would have been considerably augmented; for, while the missionary and De Vere were bandying compliments, the German and American were exchanging signs with the officer in charge of the boat, whom De Vere addressed as 'Captain Sykes.' The American, indeed, had started down the beach to speak to him, when De Vere called to the sailor to return to the ship; and Captain Sykes, with a gesture signifying that he would see Burrowes later on, swung round the boat's head, and gave the word to his Kanaka crew to give way. As if quite satisfied with this dumb promise, the American returned to the group he had just left; and the moment the missionary, Mrs Deighton, and De Vere had gone, he and the German walked off together.

As soon as the pair entered the American's house Burrowes sat down on the table, and the German on a gin-case.

'Wal, Dutchy,' said Burrowes, looking keenly at his companion, 'I reckon you know who the almighty swell in the brass-bound suit is, hey?'

'Yaw,' replied Schwartzkoff; 'und I vas thought he vas in brison put for ten years mit.'

'Wal, he did get ten years; that's true enough. But thet was six years ago, an' I reckon they've let him out. Public feelin' agin nigger-catchin' ain't as strong now as it was then.'

It's necessary—so the governments of Fiji and Queensland sez—ter accept the provision made by Providence to hev the soil tilled, and niggers was meant ter till it for thirty dollars a year to the toon of "Rool Britannyer."

'Dot is so,' assented the German; then he leaned forward—'but vat vas Pilker doing here in dis fine, svell schooner mit?'

The American placed his long, dirty forefinger on the German's shoulder.

'That is jest what you an' me is agoin' ter diskiver. An' I guess that you an' me is agoin' to find out darned easy. Bilker ain't agoin' to fool *me*; an' if he's on to anything good, I guess I'm goin' to have a cut in.'

'Vell, ve see py-und-py, ven he comes ashore. But there vas von ding I tells you—dot fine shentlemans don't know somedings vat you und me knows about Captain Pilker.'

The American gave an affirmative wink, and then, going to a rude cupboard, he took out a bottle of gin and a couple of tin mugs.

'Look hyar, Peter, I guess you an' me's goin' to do some business over this schooner, so let's be friends.'

'I vas agreeable,' said the German, with alacrity, rising from his seat; and accepting the peace-offering in the tin mug, he nodded to the American and tossed it off.

By lunch-time Mr Morecombe-Lycett had been brought ashore, and had accepted Mr Deighton's invitation to remain for the night. He was a well-dressed, good-looking man of thirty-five, and was—so the missionary sympathetically announced to his wife—suffering from a touch of malarial fever, which a little quinine and nursing would soon put right. Mr Deighton was suffering from the same complaint himself, but made little of it as he sat and talked to his visitors.

At noon, as Charlie Blount was walking past Burrowes's house, he was surprised to see the German still there. He was about to pass on—for, although not on unfriendly terms with the two men, he did not care for either of them sufficiently well to enter their houses very often, although they did his—when the American came to the door and asked him to come in and take a drink.

'Are you going on board the schooner?' asked Burrowes as Blount came in and sat down.

'No. I'm going to Lak-a-lak. I've got some natives cutting timber for me there, and thought I would just walk along the beach and see how they are getting on. Besides that, my little girl Nellie is there with my wife's brother.'

'Why,' said Burrowes, with genuine surprise, 'won't you go aboard and see if they have any provisions to sell? I heerd you say the other day that you had jest run out of coffee an' tinned meats.'

'So I have; but I don't care about going on

board for all that.' Then, looking the two men straight in their faces, he drank off the gin, set the mug down on the table, and resumed: 'I saw by my glass that that scoundrelly cut-throat and blackbirder, Bilker, is on board. That's enough for me. I heard that the infernal ruffian got ten years in Sydney jail. Sorry he wasn't hanged.'

'Vy,' said the German, whose face was considerably flushed by the liquor he had drunk, you vas in der plackpird drade yourselves von dime.'

'So I was, Peter,' said Blount quietly, 'but in ships which did the thing honestly, fairly and squarely. I, and those with me when I was in the labour-trade, never stole a nigger nor shot one. This fellow Bilker was a disgrace to every white man in the trade. He is a notorious, cold-blooded murderer.'

The conversation fell a bit flat after this, for Messrs Burrowes and Schwartzkoff began to feel uncomfortable. Six or seven years before, although then unknown to each other, and living on different islands in the New Hebrides group, they each had had business relations with Captain Bilker in the matter of supplying him with 'cargo' during his cruises for 'blackbirds'; and each of them had so carried on the 'trade' that both were ultimately compelled to leave the scenes of their operations with great haste, and take up their residence elsewhere, particularly as the commander of the cruiser which captured Captain Bilker had expressed a strong desire to make their acquaintance, and let them keep that worthy company to the gallows.

'Wal,' resumed the American, 'I guess every man has his own opinions on sich things. I have mine. Why, here's Mr Doo Veer.—Walk right in, sir, an' set daown.—And Mister Deighton too.—Howdy, parson? I'm glad to see you.'

The moment the visitors entered Blount rose to go, but the missionary, with good-natured, blundering persistency, pressed him back, holding his hand the while.

'Mr De Vere, this is Mr Blount, my very good and esteemed friend, and our countryman as well.'

'How do you do?' said the trader, taking the visitor's hand, but quickly dropping it. There was something in De Vere's set smile and cold, watery-blue eyes that he positively resented, although he knew not why. Blount, too, objected to the new-comer's habit of continually displaying his white, shapely hands, of which he seemed exceedingly proud.

However, as the dull-minded but good-hearted Deighton seemed very anxious that Blount should stay and help to entertain his guest, the trader resumed his seat, but did so with restraint and impatience showing strongly in his sunburnt and resolute face. For some ten minutes or so he remained, speaking only when he was spoken to; then he rose, and nodding a cool 'Good-day' to

the handsome Mr De Vere and the two traders, he strode to the door and walked out.

Before he was half-way from Burrowes's house to the mission-station he was overtaken by Mr Deighton.

'Mr De Vere has gone on board again,' he said in his slow, solemn way—'gone on board to get some English newspapers for me. What a very estimable and kind gentleman, Mr Blount! An aristocrat to the backbone, and a gentleman—a gentleman above all, Mr Blount—a gentleman above all. His visit has given me the most unalloyed'—

'He may be "very kind," as you say,' said Blount curtly, 'but my judgment has gone very much astray if he is what he represents himself to be. I believe the fellow is a fraud.'

'Mr Blount!' and the missionary looked genuinely shocked. 'How can you say that? You are very unjust as well as very much in error. Mr De Vere is a scion of one of the noblest of our many noble English families. He told me so himself.'

'Ah, did he? That just confirms me in my opinion of the fellow. Now, look here, Mr Deighton'—and his tone became slightly irritated—'I'm not surprised that this Mr De Vere—who, whatever he is, is *not* a scion of any noble English family—should impose upon ignorant men like Burrowes and the German, but that he should impose on you does surprise me. And yet I don't know. It is very often the case that those whose education and intelligence should be

a safeguard to them against the most palpable imposture are as easily imposed upon as the ignorant and uncultured.'

'Imposture, Mr Blount! Do you mean to say'—

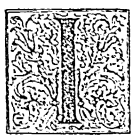
'I mean to say that this man De Vere, with his flashy get-up and imposing name, is *not* an English gentleman. He may deceive you—for you are a trusting man—and the men we have left, but he doesn't deceive me. I lived in England a long time ago, Mr Deighton, and once mixed with the class of people to which Mr De Vere professes to belong.' He turned his face away and added dreamily, 'A long time, a very long time ago; and then, with savage emphasis: 'And I no more believe that Mr "De Vere" comes from a good English family than I do that Nathaniel Burrowes, a low, broken-down New Orleans levée loafer, comes from one of the "first families in Virginia" that American newspapers are always blethering about.'

'What do you think, then, is wrong with Mr De Vere?'

'Nothing, perhaps, from your point of view; everything from mine. And so far as I am concerned, I mean to have nothing to do with these two "English gentlemen" and the yacht *Island Maid*. Well, here we are at the mission-gate, so good-day, Mr Deighton; I'm going as far as Lak-a-lak to see how my timber-getters are doing;' and shaking hands with the troubled missionary, the big, dark-faced trader strode along the beach alone.

PARASITES AND THEIR PECULIARITIES.

By PERCY H. GRIMSHAW, F.E.S.



N common language, a parasite is a creature which lives at the expense of its neighbour; but, scientifically, this definition is not quite exact enough. No one can deny, for instance, that a tiger lives at the expense of those weaker animals which are unfortunate enough to dwell in his vicinity; but we can hardly apply the name of parasite to this familiar beast. To speak more accurately, therefore, we should define a parasite as a being which derives its nutriment from some other creature, to which it is either temporarily or permanently attached, without endangering the life of its host. We often find one animal attached to another without actually feeding upon it, as in the case of sea-anemones. These creatures are sometimes found adhering to crabs or other slow-moving inhabitants of the sea; but they are in no sense parasitic, only becoming attached for the purpose of obtaining more rapidly a change of residence and surroundings.

Parasites do not belong to any special class of

their own, but are to be met with in nearly all the lower groups of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Thus we have parasitic insects, parasitic worms and shell-fish, parasitic fungi and flowering plants. But it is a curious and noteworthy fact that nearly all beings which have adopted this mode of living are very abnormal in their organisation, so much so that naturalists are often much exercised in their minds as to their real relationships. As a result of what we might call their degraded ways of life, the organs of parasites lose their functions and become modified and degraded also. In those groups of animals which pass through different stages in reaching the adult state, the parasitic representatives usually skip one or more of these stages, and, indeed, do not undergo much change at any period of their life.

As may be gathered from what we have already said, parasites are to be found in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms; but in the present paper we shall confine our attention to the former. It is among animals that we shall find the most interesting cases in illustration of their peculiar

structure and habits. Although they cannot be referred to any special class in the animal kingdom, yet, for purposes of convenience, we may roughly group them into sections according to their degree of dependence upon their host. Thus we have, to begin with, those parasites which are free during their whole life, only becoming attached to their victim for the purpose of feeding. Such are leeches, gnats, gadflies, lice, fleas, and a host of others. Then, some are free when young, passing the later periods of their life attached to or within the body of their host. Examples of these are the ticks, many crustaceans or shell-fish, and some of the worms. Others, again, reverse these conditions, commencing life as parasites and afterwards living a free and independent existence—for example, botflies and many other parasitic insects. Lastly, many animals are entirely dependent upon and attached to other animals throughout their existence—many of these, strange to say, changing their host either once only or more than once. The liver-fluke is perhaps the most familiar example of this latter class.

It is quite impossible, within the limits of a single article, to treat adequately of these various grades of parasitism. Whole volumes have been, and may still be, written showing the peculiar relations of host and guest in the various cases known; and our present purpose will best be served by taking one or two examples of each class, and describing briefly the most interesting facts in connection with them.

Of all parasites, surely the flea is the best known. It is an example of the first class, being quite free from its host in all stages of its life, and only attaching itself to feed. It is also an example of the difficulty experienced by zoologists as to the real affinities of parasites; for though now generally regarded as a degraded form of two-winged fly, yet in past time it has been variously located, and even now is often considered the type of a distinct order of insects. Fleas pass through the usual stages of an insect's life—namely, the egg, grub, pupa, and adult. The eggs are laid in dark, out-of-the-way places, such as chinks and cracks, or on rugs and carpets; and from them are hatched the grubs, which feed on dust, particles of feathers, or other animal substances. After about twelve days the grub changes into a quiescent pupa, and this in another fortnight or so to the perfect insect. It is only in this latter state that the flea sucks blood, all the other stages being inoffensive. It is curious that large swarms of fleas are sometimes found in situations where blood is only very rarely accessible, and in these cases some other means of subsistence must be resorted to.

The well-known and justly-dreaded leeches are also to be placed in the same category with the fleas, for they too limit their unwelcome attentions to such times as they are feeding. They are both aquatic and terrestrial in their habits, and attack

not only human beings, but also horses, cattle, fish, frogs, snails, and even insects. In Ceylon and other parts of the East the traveller encounters perhaps the most formidable of these ever-hungry parasites in the form of land-leeches, whose repulsive appearance and method of approach are sufficient of themselves to inspire both man and beast with a feeling of disgust and dread. They are worm-like creatures, broad at the hinder extremity and tapering to a point in front. At the broad end is a powerful sucker by which the leech adheres during its operations, while at the narrow end we find a sucker-like mouth armed with three jaws. Each of these jaws is in the form of a finely-toothed plate, and these veritable saws by their united action are capable of inflicting a deep and freely-bleeding wound. Their method of moving over the ground is very peculiar. By fixing down first one end and then the other, and alternately raising them again, these creatures advance by a characteristic looping gait, and on the approach of the unwary traveller a large number of them assemble with remarkable rapidity, and place themselves in a semi-erect position ready for attack. Upon seeing their victim they march rapidly upon him, and almost before he is aware of the fact have climbed his person and immediately proceed to thrust their hungry jaws into his flesh. Their bite is so deep that blood trickles rapidly out and runs freely down the body and legs of the disgusted and terrified traveller, who suffers no serious harm, however, so long as the wounds are not rubbed or irritated. Nevertheless, ulcers are sometimes the result, and these may even become dangerous, as was the case with some Madras sepoys during a rebellion which occurred in 1818, when numbers of them perished through this cause. When the leech is gorged with the life-fluid of its victim it drops off, falling heavily to the ground, and remaining in a quiet and harmless state until its heavy meal is digested, this process occupying weeks or even months. It is well, indeed, that the alimentary functions of such a glutton are not more active, and that it can only indulge its appetite once in a while, else such blood-letting would prove a serious obstacle to Eastern travel.

Of parasites which are free while young and only parasitic at a later stage, we may shortly describe two types—namely, the ticks and the *Filaria* or guinea-worm. The first of these are found when young upon plants. Though often called insects, they cannot bear this name in a scientific sense, for they are in reality members of the spider class, possessing when fully developed four pairs of legs, and having the head fused with the middle portion of the body. Nevertheless, when young they have only six legs, a character which is quite exceptional in the class to which they belong. In tropical countries ticks are exceedingly troublesome, and attain a considerable size. Like gnats and some other insects, the females alone

are the blood-suckers. They live amongst bushes and herbage, and rest quietly with their hook-tipped legs stretched out ready to catch upon the skin or hair of any two-footed or four-footed passerby. When attached they plunge in their serrated proboscis and suck steadily until they become distended to fifty or a hundred times their original size. The proboscis cannot be withdrawn without the aid of the tick itself, and the creature is so pertinacious that it will often allow itself to be torn to pieces rather than let go. The common dog-tick, though very minute at first, becomes, when distended with blood, similar both in size and appearance to a Windsor bean.

The other example of the second class of parasites that we have selected is also a terror to the traveller, and is found principally on the west coast of Africa. The life-history of the guinea-worm, as it is called, is most curious. It has been shown that the young worms, which are found in water, make their way first of all into the body of a small aquatic crustacean, and that it is by the swallowing of this with drinking-water that the creature is introduced into the human body. It then forces itself into the muscles and tissues just beneath the skin, and there forms an abscess. Upon the bursting of this abscess the young which have been formed in it escape to the exterior, and so the round of life again commences. As the guinea-worm may attain a length of two feet, it is not difficult to understand the serious nature of the illness induced by its presence.

Of parasites whose dependence upon their host is limited to the earlier stages of their existence, we have only space to consider a single example—namely, the red-bearded botfly, which attacks deer. This insect was only discovered to be an inhabitant of this country some two years ago, having been captured in the Ross-shire deer-forests and afterwards in the Cairngorms. It furnishes us with a good illustration of a peculiarity of parasites which we have already mentioned—namely, the shortening of their life-history by the skipping of one or more of the progressive stages through which other members of their class usually pass. Thus the female of this botfly does not lay eggs as other flies do, but gives birth to living maggots in the following curious fashion: Flying round and round the head of the poor quadruped selected as the victim, the insect suddenly darts down at the animal's nostril, and squirts therein a drop of fluid, which, if examined, will be found to contain a number of tiny maggots. These commence feeding upon the mucus and fluids in the nasal passages, and, by a curious wriggling movement, work themselves backwards until they reach the throat, where they attain their full growth. By their great irritation ulcers are formed, and the deer becomes subject to fits of sneezing and coughing. During one of these

attacks the full-grown maggot becomes ejected from the mouth and falls to the ground, where it lies dormant for some time and becomes a pupa. In the following spring the winged fly emerges to enjoy a free existence. If a female, it soon proceeds to follow the example of its parent, and in a similar manner initiates a new generation of these irritating and even dangerous parasitic grubs.

Lastly, we must say something of those parasites which have no free and separate existence at all, but which spend the whole of their degraded lives attached to or within the body of other animals. Many of these migrate, so to speak, at various periods of their existence from one kind of animal to another, and their life-history is consequently of considerable interest, not to say importance. We shall take just a couple of examples of this last group, and these must close our brief sketch of the peculiarities of parasites, those strange dependent creatures which infest all kinds and conditions of life from man himself down to the tiniest insect, or even lower still—the host, indeed, in some cases, being hardly bigger than the parasite it carries.

Every one has heard something, at least, of tapeworms, for they are only too common. They are found all over the world—everywhere, in fact, where domestic animals have accompanied man in his wanderings. The species known as *Tenia solium*, or the 'pork' tapeworm, is one of the commonest and best known, and will therefore serve well as a type of these repulsive and troublesome creatures. Roughly speaking, it consists of a head armed with suckers and hooks, and a vast number of segments, each of the hinder ones of which is capable of producing a new individual. There is no digestive apparatus whatever, and the necessary nourishment is simply absorbed through the skin. The head of the worm is securely hooked to the wall of the intestine of its host, while the remainder of the body seems to be adapted for nothing else but the production of new individuals. Hence the rapidity with which these creatures increase. The segments of the body become more individualised and independent as they recede from the head, and when the terminal ones become old enough and sufficiently ripe they simply break off, and are expelled from the body. These ripe segments are chiefly a mass of eggs, and, being now set free, are soon swallowed by that reverse-of-dainty animal, the pig. Within the pig's body the eggs are hatched and become little bladdery worms, which give rise to the condition known as 'measly' pork. When the diseased pork is afterwards eaten by a human subject, the young bladder-worm quickly develops into a mature tapeworm, budding off from its head an interminable number of joints, so that the whole creature may be ten feet in length, and consist of upwards of eight hundred separate joints! The bladder-worms may develop in

almost any part of the body; and when they reach the heart, brain, or other vital organ, quickly prove fatal. Such cases, happily, are rare, and the most usual situation infested by these 'cysticerci,' as they are called, is the tissue immediately beneath the skin.

The well-known 'liver-fluke' is another curious example of parasitic worms with a varied life-history. This creature, the cause of the dire disease known as liver-rot, so fatal in certain seasons to our sheep, is found all over Europe, North Asia, and the north of Africa. Strange to relate, the young stages of this destructive pest are spent within the body of a snail which lives in water. After a time the young flukes leave the body of the mollusc and settle upon blades of grass. Naturally enough they are then eaten by some unsuspecting sheep, who is doomed to suffer for its ignorance. After about a month the poor animal becomes languid, the whites of its eyes turn yellow, the wool falls off, and fever ensues. A couple of months later, if the sheep has not already succumbed, other symptoms become prevalent; swellings in different parts of the body become noticeable, especially a large one under the jaw. By this time the fluke has reached the liver, where it may remain for some time. It

usually, however, forces its way out through the bile-duct into the intestine, whence it escapes to the exterior. Few sheep recover from this terrible disease, and most of those attacked die in the early stages. The fluke is not confined to the sheep, but sometimes occurs in the horse, in deer, goats, and many other animals. It has even attacked man himself, but this is a rare case, and most fortunately so.

We thus see that the life-phenomena of parasites are extremely interesting and varied in their nature, and there are scores—nay, hundreds of others that we have not even hinted at, whose habits are equally worthy of our consideration. Moreover, we have said little or nothing of their internal structure, and here we should find still more interesting facts for study. We should see the curious economy of Nature on every hand, as evinced in the total suppression of organs where they are not needed. We should see the development of others adapted for purposes peculiar to parasitic life, and a host of other anatomical details most wonderful and suggestive, leading us, indeed, to forget the horrible ideas we usually associate with parasites, and teaching us that in whatever obscure corner of Nature's world we look we shall find something to marvel at and admire.

THE BROTHERS OF THE WOLF.

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX, Author of *If Sinners Entice Thee, The Bond of Black, Whoso Findeth a Wife, The Day of Temptation, &c.*



T was certainly a very odd experience.

The half-legendary village of Monte Lupo, the Misty Mountain of the Wolf, had for years possessed an attraction for me as a place to visit, for its people had a decidedly bad reputation.

Ask any man in Tuscany, or in Italy for the matter of that, whether he has heard of Monte Lupo, and he will raise his shoulders to his ears, exhibit his palms, and pull a very wry face. It is a place that the Tuscan does not care to mention.

I confess to be fond of poking about in the quaint out-of-the-way corners of Italy; therefore, for the purpose of a book I was engaged upon last summer, I one day determined to set forth and see this mysterious place for myself. Perhaps the real reason of my journey was because my friend Carpena, of the Carbineers, had told me that for many years there had been sinister rumours regarding the inhabitants of that almost inaccessible little village high up in the very heart of the blue, towering Apennines, and had added: 'The fact is, in that place they're all thieves and murderers. But our Government are so slow to act.'

The popular idea, of course, is that brigandage

has been stamped out in Italy; but within thirty miles of where I live, down in the Maremma—that wide fever-marsh stretching from Pisa towards Rome—the country is even to-day scoured by the fearless outlaws who will attack and rob the traveller, and slit his throat if he resists. Those unsafe roads are daily and nightly patrolled by mounted Carbineers in pairs, smart in their cocked hats, white gloves, and immaculate uniforms; but very often in broad daylight there is a sharp crack of a hidden rifle, and one or other of the unfortunate guards falls from his saddle with a bullet through his heart.

I told nobody of my intention of visiting Monte Lupo, supposed to be the headquarters of the Maremma outlaws; but, putting my revolver in my pocket, I one day travelled by train up to Lucca, driving thence in five hours into the mountains, where I slept the night at Ponte e Serraglio, a quiet, peaceful little village embowered in limes and chestnuts in the midst of wild and magnificent scenery. Next day at dawn I pushed farther on into the mountains, until, about two o'clock, we reached a tiny unnamed hamlet, where I ordered my wondering driver to remain until my return.

In August, the 'Month of the Lion,' as it is called in Tuscany, the days are long; therefore I

set out alone for Monte Lupo, and, directed by an old herdsman I met upon the road, traversed one of the wildest and loneliest valleys I have ever entered. Its perfect silence, even in the sunlight, was most depressing. An eagle soaring far above was the only living thing I saw. At last, however, I came to a broken moss-grown bridge over a mountain torrent, a relic of medieval times, and high up rose towering towards the sky a sheer wall of bare gray rock. In vain I looked for the village, but could see nothing. So cunningly was the place constructed back in the Middle Ages that from the road it was not visible. In that solid wall of rock, I afterwards discovered, were loopholes overlooking the whole country for many miles. Only on one side—the side unapproachable—was this nest of thieves visible at all, the only way to the ancient stronghold being by the steep, narrow path by which I was ascending.

The long climb was very tedious in the blazing sun, until, at a sharp bend in the path, I passed through an ancient gateway in which a rusty portcullis still remained, and a few moments later found myself in the small, evil-smelling mountain village, the home of the daring Brothers of the Wolf.

The place, white beneath the sun-glare, was deserted, the only sign of life being a few strutting hens and a mangy cat stretched lazily on the hot stones. It was very interesting as a well-preserved mountain stronghold—exactly the same that day as ages ago, when the immortal Dante lived in Florence, and the Guelphs and Ghibellines fought so fiercely in the valley through which I had passed. The world had much changed in the past six hundred years; but Monte Lupo had remained there ever the same, watching that silent valley; its people robbers through every generation.

Among the old, tumble-down houses I wandered until I came to one with a national coat-of-arms upon it, and, having knocked, I was admitted into a large, cool room with stone floor, a big table in the centre, and benches around, reminding me of a public-house taproom in England. It was the Syndic's drawing-room.

Presently that functionary appeared, a thin-faced, small-eyed man of fifty, a well-to-do *contadino*. He had evidently watched my approach with all the village, for in order to receive me he had put on his *vesta* clothes. In response to my respectful salutations he became the essence of Italian politeness, and requested me to be seated.

When we had chatted for a few minutes he suddenly exclaimed:

‘The signore is English?’

‘Yes,’ I answered, smiling. ‘But how did you know I was not German?’

‘The English always have the same accent. They cannot roll our Italian *r*’s;’ and, laughing, he rose and took from a cupboard a big flask of red wine and a couple of glasses. ‘This is the

best I can offer you,’ he said. ‘It isn’t exactly Château Lafitte, you know.’

I tasted it—an excellent Rufina, but a trifle acid. Then we fell to chatting about the prospects of the wine season, the eternal subject of conversation with the Tuscan *contadini*.

In reply to his inquiry, I told him that I lived in the city away by the sea, whereupon he regarded me curiously, and said in a voice of interrogation:

‘Then the signore is the Englishman who writes books?’

I nodded. Strange, I thought, that I should be known in that out-of-the-world place. I reflected, however, how I had heard that the outlaws of the Maremma had spies in every town. Truly I was in queer company. Still, as guest of the Syndic, I was perfectly safe.

He handed me a long Tuscan Virginia, one of those thin, rank cigars which diffuse a choking odour of burnt paper; and, fearing to offend him, I lit it and tried to appear as though I enjoyed his rough hospitality. Truth to tell, however, there was a look in his small, keen eyes that I did not at all like. It had occurred to me that I was in a den of the very worst thieves in the whole of a thieving country; and that, if they suspected me of spying, a quick cut from a ready knife might end my career.

Gradually, however, all fear left me. I began to feel really pleased that I had come there. A curious sensation of elation crept over me, as though the wine had been a trifle too heavy. Perhaps, however, it was that horrible stinking arrangement of cabbage-leaves. At any rate, my head was reeling. I was a fool to have ventured there.

I tried to rise, but my legs refused to support me. I heard my host speaking in a strange, far-off voice, and a few seconds later a sudden darkness fell upon me, blotting out all consciousness.

How long I remained in that helpless condition I have no idea. When, however, I opened my eyes, I found myself in a dark, damp, cellar-like place, with a chilling drip, drip of water sounding in my ears. I was propped up against the wall, but the place was in pitch darkness. I groped about, and discovered that the chamber was a narrow underground place, probably one of the old subterranean cells of the ruined medieval castle around which the village was built. The ponderous door was locked. I shouted and pounded upon it, but there was no sound. I seemed entombed. Through several anxious hours I paced the noisome place, reproaching myself that I had ventured there, until at length the door was unbarred by two men—dark-faced, evil-looking scoundrels, who carried lanterns. Both wished me a polite good-morning. I reflected that if it were morning I must have remained unconscious for many hours.

Then, in reply to my inquiry as to the reason I was held a prisoner, one man, who spoke in a tone of authority, although with most ineffable politeness, said:

'All those who visit Monte Lupo must pay toll.'

'You want money?' I said, feeling like a rat in a hole. 'You shall have all that I have upon me;' and I placed my hand in my pocket, drawing forth thirty-three francs in paper money.

The fellow smiled, excused himself, but politely informed me that such an amount was absolutely useless. His appearance coincided exactly with the description I had had of the fearless Conti, chief of the Brothers of the Wolf.

'Well,' I said furiously, 'yesterday I called upon the Syndic of this village, who, I presume, drugged the wine he gave me and handed me over to you. Remember I'm an Englishman, and the Ministry down at Rome will hear of this.'

'It is quite needless for the signore to express anger,' answered the imperturbable outlaw, with a grim smile. 'A little draft for five thousand francs upon the signore's banker will settle matters. Our good Tonio, here, will take it down to Livorno, and the day after to-morrow he will return with the money. When he comes back the signore will, if he wishes, be at liberty to withdraw himself from our hospitality.'

'I'll write nothing of the sort,' I answered.

There was a dead silence.

'That is your decision?' he asked after a pause. 'Certainly.'

He smiled grimly. Then, crossing the chamber, he placed a key in a low door in the opposite wall and opened it.

'The signore has come to see the sights of Monte Lupo. It is good. He shall see them all;' and he waved his hand in the direction of the inner chamber.

I looked in. The gruesome sight I witnessed there caused me to start back horrified. A cold perspiration broke out upon me. The place, lit by a feeble lamp, smelt of chloride of lime, and in the floor was an open grave. Beside it was an open coffin, containing the body of a man.

At this spot the Brothers of the Wolf got rid of the evidences of their crimes. There was truth, then, in the rumour that the bodies of those they murdered they buried in quicklime.

'The signore you see there,' he explained, indicating the body, 'was, like yourself, disinclined to make us any little present, so we are presenting him with a snug bed instead;' and his harsh laugh was echoed by his grinning companion.

The situation was desperate. This band of outlaws was feared from end to end of Tuscany. Those who fell into their hands and would not pay they murdered, fearing lest they should complain to the authorities. Those who paid were released only on a vow of secrecy. The victims, for the most part landowners, knew too well the terrible

vengeance which this band would wreak upon them and their families if they informed.

'Now,' said the man persuasively, 'if the signore is willing to write us an order for the money, we are quite ready. The signore is English, therefore rich. Five thousand francs is surely not much?'

In English money it was two hundred pounds.

'I'm poor,' I declared. 'I can't give you so much.'

'We never bargain with a gentleman for his life,' the fellow answered, with an air of superior *nonchalance*, closing the door of the inner chamber. He spoke almost perfect Italian, without that curious aspirate which marks the Tuscan tongue. According to popular belief this suave bandit belonged to one of the first families in Rome, but had killed a rival to the hand of the woman who was now the notorious Princess Palladio, and had ever since hidden in the mountains, becoming chief of the dreaded Brothers.

I knew he was not a man to be trifled with. Suddenly a brilliant idea came to me; so I said with apparent ill-grace:

'Bring me a pen and paper, then.'

They brought it, and upon it I wrote the following order upon French's, the English bank in Florence, scribbling badly, so that the outlaws would be unable to read it:

'Please pay bearer £200. Tell Consul-General I am held prisoner at the Mountain of the Wolf.' Then, having signed it, I handed it to Conti.

He carefully examined it, and smiled in satisfaction.

'Good,' he responded. 'Tonio will ride a fast horse into Firenze, and return to-morrow. Until then, I regret that the signore should be inconvenienced and rendered so uncomfortable.'

But I declared that it was a mere trifle, congratulating myself, nevertheless, upon outwitting these scoundrels. In the course of a few hours the Carbineers would swoop down upon this colony of outlaws, and the encounter was certain to be a very sharp and lively one.

The head of the fearless brotherhood thoughtfully left me his lamp; and patiently I waited in that gloomy cell through several hours.

Again the door was suddenly thrown open, and Conti appeared, his face pale and distorted by fierce anger.

'So you would give us up to the guards—eh?' he snarled, waving the paper in my face. 'You thought us such fools that we could not read English? But we are not to be entrapped like that. We never take money from those who cannot keep a still tongue. Only the silent go forth from here.'

My position was indeed desperate. I had heard sufficient of their inhuman treatment of those who refused to pay ransom to know that I, having failed to outwit them, might now be

murdered without the slightest compunction. By that ill-advised note I had foolishly shown myself their enemy.

'You have seen that open grave beyond,' the notorious outlaw said in a hard voice. 'It is prepared for you! You will pay, or you will not leave this place alive!'

'Enough!' I cried, springing suddenly upon him. 'Take that!' and drawing my revolver, which still remained in my pocket, apparently overlooked by them when I was unconscious, I fired point-blank in his face. 'And that!'

He sprang back with a startled cry, evidently amazed that I had a weapon. A third shot I directed at his companion; and ere the flash had died away I had dashed through the door and up a short flight of broken steps into the light of day.

I emerged amid the ruins of the great old castle; but, running to the rampart, I sprang over it, and found myself outside the village, with the path by which I had ascended deep down before me.

Away I dashed for life. Behind me sounded wild shouts and vehement curses; and as I ran rifles cracked behind me, and several bullets whistled unpleasantly about my ears. The hasty footsteps of my pursuers gradually gained upon me, and I knew that it would be useless to make any stand against them. Therefore, heedless of where I went, and urged to take terrible leaps by a courage begotten of a strong desire for life, I sped on; down, down the mountain-side, until I reached the broken bridge and the high-road, where I found that, having successfully leaped several places where my pursuers feared to follow, I had once more gained considerably upon them. Those wild leaps saved me.

Again my pursuers fired at me, but their bullets went wide.

The *Ave Maria* was ringing when, having joined my anxious driver, who was waiting for me at the hamlet, I drove into Ponte e Serraglio; and it was past midnight when our wheels rattled over the uneven pebbles of gray old Lucca.

Next morning I told my story to the *Questore*, or chief of police, and then went my way, full of vivid recollections of my exciting adventure.

Since then, during the past year, the daring robberies and outrages committed by the Brothers of the Wolf have been innumerable. A paragraph which I, however, read some six weeks ago in the *Tribuna* caused me considerable satisfaction. The cutting, now before me as I write, translated, states that a strong force of Carbineers secretly ascended to the village of Monte Lupo by night, and succeeded in surprising the outlaws. A fierce encounter ensued, during which the guards succeeded in shooting the ringleader Conti and four of his companions. Some twenty prisoners were taken, all of whom were recognised as

desperate thieves, including the Syndic, who was alleged to have profited considerably by the depredations of the villagers, and to have given them his countenance and protection. The Minister of the Interior had, on hearing of this, issued an order that the village should be destroyed by explosives, and this had been done after the household effects of the whole place had been heaped up and burned.

'The Carbineers discovered a large quantity of stolen property hidden in the ancient fortress,' the paragraph continues; 'but what was strangest of all was a chamber wherein was an open grave. In this horrible place, one of the ancient dungeons of the castle, was a coffin containing the body of a victim apparently awaiting burial in quicklime. At first the guards were horrified; but their horror was turned to laughter when they found that the supposed body was in reality only a wax-faced dummy, and that the whole scene was cunningly arranged to terrify the victims from whom the thieves endeavoured to extort money.'

The explanation of the open grave was humorous enough; but there is at this moment when I write a terrible picture posted on the notice-board of the Communal Palace of Lucca: it is a gruesome picture of the notorious brigand Conti and his four companions, whose bodies were, after death, stuck up against a wall and photographed, by order of the Italian Government, so that the public should know that the scoundrels were really dead, and likewise to warn all other outlaws of the fate awaiting them. As for my affable friend the Syndic, he is at present on the island of Elba, serving a sentence of ten years' imprisonment.

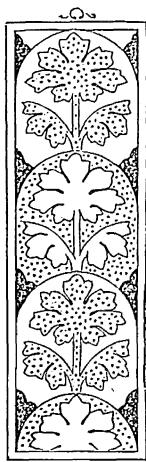
I revisited Monte Lupo with some English friends a few days ago. The dynamite of the corps of Engineers has done its work well, for there is scarcely one stone standing upon another.

TO MY LADY.

THE light of stainless dawn is in your eyes,
And I have looked in them, and learned to pray
That in their glory I may find the way
That leads into the earthly paradise;
For you have bound me, freed me, made me wise
To read the promise of a perfect day
In your sweet face, fair as some morn in May
When earth grows young again 'neath cloudless skies.

And as through rifted clouds a man may read
The pledge of peace revealed in stormless blue,
So doth my heart, with every thought of you,
Have glimpses of a life completely freed
From all that is unrestful and untrue,
Spanned by the heaven of a lover's creed.

PERCY GALLARD.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

STEVENSON'S RELATIONS WITH CHILDREN.

By EDMUND GOSSE.

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IN 1885, when Stevenson published his book of poems called *A Child's Garden of Verses*, I was so greatly enchanted with it that I could not help importuning a great poet of an earlier generation, Mr Swinburne, to read it. If by any chance this page should meet the eye of my eminent friend, I trust that he will forgive me for saying that his reply was a terrible disappointment to me. Mr Swinburne told me that he had read *A Child's Garden* to please me, but that he could see nothing in it that showed any appreciation of childhood.

When the Editor of *The Youth's Companion* asked me to write him an article on Stevenson in his relation to children, this disconcerting incident was recalled to my memory. If Mr Swinburne was right, this essay should be like the famous chapter on 'Snakes in Iceland'—Stevenson had no relation to children! That would be a blunt way of answering the question, and it would have an element of truth, though very far from the whole truth.

Robert Louis Stevenson was an only child—a precocious child—brought up among grown-up people in the gravity of a professional home in Edinburgh. It is not for me, who was not there, to repeat anything which may have reached me about his playfellows and his relations to them in those early times. Mr Sidney Colvin will no doubt tell us all that it behoves us to know about them when he comes to publish his *Life of Stevenson*. I think we shall discover that, in spite of cousins and companions, his bringing-up was rather solitary. I may tell one story, because he told it to me himself. It holds back the veil from his childhood for a moment.

He was still a rather little boy, when, in the summer holidays, having been reading a number of 'detective' novels of a bad kind, he was passing one Sunday afternoon along a road which

led through one of the suburbs of Edinburgh, and saw a deserted house, left furnished, but without, apparently, a caretaker. It suddenly struck Stevenson that it would be a very gallant thing to break into this house. No one was in sight, and, stealing round, he found it possible to open a window at the back, and so climb in. It really was unoccupied, and he prowled from room to room, looking at the books and pictures, in a great excitement of spirit, until he heard, as he thought, a noise in the garden. This sent him immediately, in an instant collapse of courage, under a bed, and then terror seized him. He imagined himself pounced upon, charged with robbery, marched home with gyves upon his wrists, and arriving just as the family were assembling to attend evening service. He burst out crying, and could not stop, and his sobs echoed in the empty house.

He crept out where he had crept in, having done no harm to anything except his little tender Scottish conscience. But the spirit of adventure, which was native to him, is exemplified in the story, and also a sort of solitude, as of a boy obliged to play by himself for want of other pirates and burglars to combine with.

When his mind was rapidly opening out in all directions, and he was eager to form correct and independent impressions of various classes of humanity, Stevenson attempted to study children also. In 1874 he put down some notes on the movements of young children which he never, I think, published. There was little, I suppose, in these remarks which showed special interest in the theme. Of young people dancing he said: 'There is a sincerity, a directness, an impulsive truth, about their free gestures that shows throughout all imperfection, and is to us a reminiscence of primitive festivals and the Golden Age.' Again, in describing the movements of children, he rather quaintly remarked: 'In view of their future, our heart is softened towards these clumsy little ones.

They will be more adroit when they are not so happy.' These sentences, by a young man of four-and-twenty, show no instinctive sympathy with the innocent inconsequence of children. Unconsciously, the writer is impatient of their immaturity, and looks forward to a time when they will have grown more interesting; and this, I think, was, in the main, Stevenson's attitude to children.

When our own children were born, it is among the pleasantest of our family memories that Stevenson took a lively interest in each event. We have to this day letters and verses from that period which are among the greatest treasures in our household archives. For ten years, from the earliest of the events so merrily and kindly recorded, Stevenson was constantly liable to break in upon us with his delightful presence. But my children, now that they are grown or growing up, lament that they recollect so little of our shining visitant. They recall his long hair falling almost to his shoulders, his brilliant eyes, the strange brown shawl which he wore about his arms in the house and even at his meals; but they have little memory of his playing with them or addressing them.

Another eminent writer, whose intimacy we enjoyed in those years long ago, used to insist on seeing the babies, on attempting to pierce their fat folds with a digging finger, and on kissing the curly rose-buds of their toes. That showed, no doubt, the genuine adorer of infancy; and, judged by that standard, I cannot question that Stevenson would have been found wanting. I do not think that he ever 'held a baby;' and, had he been forced to do so, I am convinced that the creature would have doubled up and slipped through his hands.

Some people secure a great reputation for the love of little children which they only half-deserve. I consider it only 'half-desert' when it is mingled with a desire to see how the act strikes grown-up people. I will mention a very eminent example of this. When I was young I had the privilege of knowing Hans Christian Andersen; and once, in a house in Denmark, I was fortunate enough to hear him tell a fairy-story of his own to a circle of young people. They were picturesquely arranged on low stools in front of him, and we men and women stood behind. The story was supposed to be no business of ours; but I could not help observing that the old poet constantly glanced up at us, and that there were asides and allusions in the story which the children could not have comprehended, and which he would have hated to see that we missed. I made inquiry of my hostess, and was told that Andersen would never tell stories to little children unless there was a background of adults. Stevenson was not so artful; he knew that it was the grown-up people who appreciated his conversation, and he addressed them directly. He was

prepared to wait for the children until they should grow old enough to comprehend. No one, indeed, ever supposed that he had any 'relation with children' until he began to write verses on the subject. He used to say that he wished he had a little son or daughter, in the casual, pensive way in which bachelors compliment the married, when they observe their domestic bliss and feel a fleeting caprice.

About 1878, I find, in looking over old letters, Stevenson telling me, 'I envy you your wife, your home, your child;' and this would be enough for a constructive biographer to build up a theory of Stevenson's domestic aspirations upon, were it not that, unfortunately, the sentence proceeds, and ends with 'your cat.' Now, Stevenson's relations to cats were absolutely cold; and if we had to argue that he loved children on the basis of this declaration, it would go ill with us. But, as all the world has been informed, he eventually married a lady who brought with her a young son by a former marriage.

I am not going to intrude on the province of Mr Lloyd Osbourne, who is thoroughly capable of telling us what his communications with his stepfather were; but I think he will not be angry with me if I say that the new relation, almost that of a father, and quite that of a playfellow, made an instant change in Louis Stevenson's attitude towards children. He began to see in them all variations of this intelligent and sympathetic little stepson of his own.

About 1881 Stevenson sent me a copy of verses, which have never been published; they are very entertaining in their solemn puerility; and I think that my readers will like to possess them. The poem is called 'A Martial Elegy for some Lead Soldiers,' and I suspect that it is the result of games with the pea-cannon between Louis himself and his little stepson:

'For certain soldiers lately dead
Our reverent dirge shall here be said:
Them, when their martial leader called,
No dread preparative appalled;
But, leaden-hearted, leaden-heeled,
I marked them steadfast in the field.
Death grimly sided with the foe;
And smote each leaden hero low;
Proudly they perished one by one;
The dread pea-cannon's work was done!
Oh! not for them the tears we shed,
Consigned to their congenial lead;
But, while unmoved their sleep they take,
We mourn for their dear Captain's sake—
For their dear Captain, who shall smart,
Both in his pocket and his heart,
Who saw his heroes shed their gore,
And lacked a penny to buy more.'

It was at Davos Platz, and in 1881, that the Captain, here so pathetically celebrated, put up a

small printing-press, in working which his step-father and he enjoyed themselves very much. Stevenson was inspired both with pen and pencil, and prepared three tiny volumes of verse, illustrated by himself, which were most laboriously worked off upon Master Lloyd's press. These little books are now extremely scarce, and huge prices are given for them. At that time, for five shillings, a regular 'corner' in them might have been made. In one of these the author makes the following apology:

Here, perfect to a wish,
We offer, not a dish,
But just the platter;
A book that's not a book,
A pamphlet in the look
But not the matter.

I own, in disarray,
As to the flowers of May,
The frosts of Winter,
To my poetic rage
The smallness of the page,
And—of the printer.

It is a temptation to make some extracts from these diverting little books; but as I look through my own set of them for this purpose, I am bound to admit that, although they are full of fun, it is the fun of a grown-up person reflecting on his own childishness, and not of a child among children.

We come, therefore, to the *Child's Garden of Verses*, which first made Stevenson known to the world as a poet and as a student of childhood. It is necessary to remind ourselves that twelve years ago Stevenson's name was not one to conjure with, as it is now. His friends were as timid as hens about this new experiment of their duckling's; they hesitated and doubted to the last. Nor was it only they who doubted. The poet himself had fearful qualms. He wrote to me about the proofs of the *Child's Garden of Verses*, March 12, 1885: 'They look ghastly in the cold light of print; but there is something nice in the little ragged regiment after all; the blackguards seem to me to smile, to have a kind of childish, treble note that sounds in my ears freshly; no song, if you will, but a child's voice.'

The book, therefore, was somewhat timidly published; but there was no doubt about the authenticity of the voice, and Stevenson was accepted at once as one of the rare writers of genius about childhood. And then it was that Mr Swinburne chilled my blood by denying to the verses all appreciation of childhood! The explanation was, no doubt, that Mr Swinburne—whose rapture in the helpless charm of infancy is so marked that he cannot pass a cradle without peeping in, while the sirens sing for him behind the curtain of every wandering perambulator—felt at once that Stevenson had experienced nothing of this particular fascination of the genus Child. It is true, I think; Stevenson did experience

nothing of it; but he possessed another and a still rarer quality. He retained, in extraordinary freshness, the memory of himself as a child. Most persons have a very vague recollection of what they themselves really felt and hoped for at the age of eight; they try to reproduce their impressions, and the experience of five mingles with that of fifteen. But Stevenson had no cloudiness of memory; he knew exactly what he had gone through. 'I remember,' he said, 'as though it were yesterday, the expansion of spirit, the dignity and self-reliance that came with a pair of moustachios in burnt cork, even when there was none to see.' He himself, as we soon divined, was the child whose emotions and adventures were described in the *Child's Garden of Verses*. But it was not so readily discovered that there was much of the grown-up Stevenson in some of those pretty confessions. Every one recollects and delights in 'The Land of Counterpane,' which begins:

When I was sick, and lay abed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

All this, we may say, is the imaginative experience of a sick child. But, to the very close of Stevenson's life, he was accustomed to make up adventures as he lay in bed very still, forbidden to speak or move, propped up on pillows, with the world of fancy before him. He had retained a great deal of the temperament of a child, and it was his philosophy to encourage it. In his dreary passages of bed, when his illness was more than commonly heavy upon him, he used to contrive little amusements for himself. He played on the flute, or he modelled little figures and groups in clay. But he could not always be doing this; and when his fingers were tired he lay gazing down on the white world which covered him, and imagined that armies were marching over the hills of his knees, or ships coming to anchor between the blanket and the sheet. Towards the end of his life he complained that he could not care any more about the Land of Counterpane; and to those who knew him best this seemed quite a serious sign of impaired vitality.

My conclusion, then, would be that, in the years I knew him, if Stevenson expressed much interest in children, it was mainly for the sake of their fathers and mothers; but that after a while he began to take a very great delight in summoning back to his clear recollection the panic fears and adventurous pleasures of his own early youth, thus becoming, in his portraiture of himself, the consummate painter of one species of child. But his relation to other children was shy and gently defiant: it would have exhausted him to play with them; but he looked forward to a time when they should be old enough to talk to him.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXIX.



It would be idle to say that Browne will never forget his feelings when the hail reached him from the deck, announcing the fact that a boat from the Russian man-of-war was coming alongside. It was the most desperate moment of his life; and there are times, even now, when only to dream of it is sufficient to bring him wide awake with a cold sweat upon his forehead. As he heard it he turned to Jimmy, who was leaning over the bunk in which Maas lay, and said anxiously:

'I suppose I may leave him to you, Jimmy? You will take care that they don't get any information out of him?'

'You may trust me for that,' Jimmy replied, and there was a look of determination in his face as he said it that boded ill for any attempt Maas might make to communicate with the enemy. 'I hope for his own sake that he won't wake while they are here. Jack, my son, this is going to be a big deal for all of us. Keep your head while they're aboard, or you'll be in Queer Street.'

Thereupon they shook hands solemnly.

'Thank Heaven I've got you with me, old chap,' said Browne fervently. 'You don't know what a relief it is to me to know that. Now I must go and warn Miss Petrovitch and Madame Bernstein.'

'Good-bye, old fellow,' said Foote. 'Good luck go with you.'

Browne glanced again at Maas, then he went out, closing the door behind him, and made his way through the saloon in the direction of Katherine's cabin. He had scarcely knocked at the door before she opened it. From the pallor of her face he guessed that she knew something of what was happening. This proved to be so; for Browne afterwards discovered that the cruiser had all the time been plainly visible from her port-hole.

'I have just seen a boat pass,' she said. 'Have they come to search the yacht?'

'Yes,' said Browne. 'You need not be afraid, however; they will not find him. He is hidden in a place where they would never think of looking; and, to make assurance doubly sure, MacAndrew is with him.'

'But what was that noise I heard just now? It sounded as if you were struggling with some one, and trying to drag him down into the saloon.'

Browne informed her in a few brief words of what had occurred, and bade her, in case she should be questioned, keep up the fiction that Maas was seriously ill. Then, bidding her inform

Madame Bernstein of what was going on, he left her and returned to the deck. Simultaneously with his arrival there the Russian officer made his appearance at the gangway. He was a tall, handsome man of about thirty years of age. Having reached the deck, he looked about him as if he scarcely knew whom to address; then, seeing that the captain looked to Browne as if for instructions, he saluted him, and said in French:

'Your pardon, monsieur, but this is the yacht *Lotus Blossom*, is it not?'

'It is,' said Browne, 'and I am the owner. What can I have the pleasure of doing for you? You find us in rather a fix. We have had a break-down in the engine-room, and, as you can see for yourself, it has left us in a by no means pleasant position.'

'I have to present the compliments of my captain to you, and to request that you will permit me to overhaul your vessel.'

'To overhaul my vessel!' cried Browne. 'Surely that is a very curious request. For what reason do you wish to inspect her?'

'I regret to say that we have heard that an attempt is being made to rescue an escaped convict from the island yonder. From information we received, it is believed he is on board your vessel.'

'A runaway convict on board my yacht?' cried Browne in a tone that suggested complete surprise. 'You must excuse me if I do not understand you. You surely do not suppose that I make it my business to go about the world assisting convicts to escape from captivity?'

'That is no business of mine,' replied the officer. 'All I have to do is to obey my instructions. I should, therefore, be glad if you would permit me to inspect your vessel.'

'You may do so with pleasure,' said Browne. 'But let it be understood, before you commence, that I resent the intrusion, and shall, immediately on my return to civilisation, place the matter before my Government to act as they think best. You have, of course, considered what the consequences of your action will be?'

'It is not my business to think of the consequences,' said the other. 'All I have to do is to obey the orders I receive. May I therefore trouble you to permit me to carry them out? I should be loath to have to signal to my ship for assistance.'

'Such a course will not be necessary,' said Browne, with all the dignity of which he was master. 'If you persist in your absurd demand, I shall raise no further objection. Only, I should be glad if you could do so with as little delay as

possible. I have a friend below who is seriously ill, and I am anxious to return to him.'

'In that case, it would be as well for us to proceed without further loss of time,' said the officer.

Turning to Captain Mason, who was standing beside him, Browne gave the necessary orders. The Russian officer immediately called up a couple of hands from his boat alongside, and then, escorted by Browne, set off on his tour of inspection. Commencing with the men's quarters forward, he searched every nook and cranny, but without success. Then, little by little, they worked their way aft, exploring the officers' and engineers' quarters as they proceeded. The engine-room and stoke-hole followed next, and it was then that Browne's anxiety commenced. The convict, as he had good reason to know, was the possessor of a hacking cough, and should he give proof of its existence now they were ruined indeed.

'I presume you do not wish to look into the furnaces,' ironically remarked the chief-engineer, who had accompanied them during their visit to his own particular portion of the vessel. 'Should you desire to do so, I shall be pleased to have them opened for you.'

'I have no desire to look into them,' said the officer, who by this time was beginning to feel that he had been sent on a wild-goose chase.

'In that case, let us finish our inspection, and be done with it,' said Browne. 'It is not pleasant for me, and I am sure it cannot be for you.' As he spoke he turned to the officer, and signed him to make his way up the steel ladder to the deck above. Just as he himself was about to set foot on it, the sound of a smothered cough came from the spot where the men lay hidden, and at the same instant the officer stopped and looked round. Browne felt his whole body grow cold with terror. Fortunately, however, even if he had heard it, the other failed to place the proper construction upon it, and they left the engine-room without further comment. Then, having explored the smoking-room and deck-house, they made their way aft to the drawing-room by way of the main companion-ladder.

'I have two ladies on board, monsieur,' said Browne as they reached the drawing-room and stood for a moment looking about them, 'also the sick friend of whom I spoke to you just now. Perhaps you would not mind waiving your right to inspect their cabins.'

'Monsieur,' said the officer, 'I must see every cabin. There must be no exceptions.'

'In that case,' replied Browne, 'there is no more to be said. Will you be kind enough to accompany me?'

So saying, he led him forward a few paces, and, having shown him the pantry and stewards' quarters, the storerooms, bathrooms, and other domestic offices, took him to the cabin in which Maas was undergoing his involuntary confinement.

Browne knocked softly upon the door, and a moment later Jimmy Foote opened it, with his finger on his lips as if to warn them to be silent.

'Hush!' he whispered. 'Don't wake him; he has been asleep for nearly half-an-hour, and it will do him a world of good.'

Browne translated this speech to the officer, and when he had done so they entered and approached the bedside. The representative of Imperial Russia looked down upon Maas, who was sleeping as placidly as a little child; at the same time his eyes took in the rows of medicine bottles on the table and all the usual paraphernalia of a sickroom. It was plain not only that he imagined Jimmy Foote to be the doctor in charge, but also that he knew nothing of the identity of the man before him.

'What is the matter with him?' he asked a little suspiciously of Browne.

'Pneumonia, following a severe chill,' the other whispered. 'We want to get him down to Yokohama as quickly as possible in order that we may place him in the hospital there. I presume you are satisfied that he is not the man you want?'

The officer nodded his head. 'Quite satisfied,' he answered emphatically. 'The man I want is a little, old fellow with red hair. He is thirty years this gentleman's senior.'

Thereupon they passed out of the cabin again, and made their way along the alley-way towards the drawing-room once more.

When they reached it they found Katherine and Madame Bernstein awaiting them there. Browne, in a tone of apology, explained the reason of the officer's visit.

'However, I hope soon to be able to convince him that his suspicions are unfounded,' he said in conclusion. 'We have searched every portion of the yacht, and he has not so far discovered the man he wants.'

'Do you say that the person you are looking for is a Russian convict?' continued Madame Bernstein, who felt that she must say something in order to cover the look of fear that was spreading over Katherine's face.

'Yes, madame,' the officer replied. 'He is a most dangerous person, who in his time has caused the police an infinity of trouble.'

'A Nihilist, I suppose?' said Browne, as if he thought that that point might be taken for granted.

'Indeed, no,' said the officer. 'His name is Kleinkopf, and he is, or rather was, the most noted diamond-thief in Europe.'

'What?' cried Browne, startled out of himself by what the other said. 'What do you mean? A diamond?'

What he was about to add must for ever remain a mystery, for at that moment Madame Bernstein uttered a little cry and fell forward against the table in a dead faint. With a face

as ashen as a sere-cloth, Katherine ran to her assistance, and Browne followed her example. Together they raised her and carried her to a seat.

'You see, sir, what mischief you have done,' said Browne, addressing the Russian officer, who stood looking from one to another of them as if he scarcely knew what to say or how to act. 'You have frightened her into a faint.'

Picking her up in his arms, he carried her to her cabin, and laid her in her bunk. Then, resigning her to the care of Katherine and the stewardess, whom he had summoned to his assistance, he rejoined the officer outside.

'If you will come with me, sir,' he said, 'I will show you the remainder of the vessel, and then I think you will be able to return to your ship and inform your commander that on this occasion, at least, he has committed an egregious blunder, of which he will hear more anon.'

'I am at monsieur's disposal,' replied the officer; and together they entered Katherine's cabin. Needless to say there was no sign of any fugitive there. Browne's own cabin followed next, with the same result. At last they reached the deck once more.

'You are satisfied, I presume, sir, that the man you want is not on board my yacht?' said Browne, with considerable hauteur.

'Quite satisfied,' replied the other. 'And yet I can assure you, monsieur, that we had the best of reasons for believing that you were conniving at his escape.'

'I am very much obliged to you, I am sure,' said Browne. 'I fancy, however, that, even presuming I contemplated anything of the sort, I have convinced you that I have not carried it out yet. And now I have the honour to wish you a very good morning. My engineer informs me that the break-down in the engine-room has been repaired; and, if you have any suspicions left, you will have the satisfaction of seeing us get under way without further delay. I tell you this in case you should imagine that I intend hanging about here in the hope of picking up the man to whom you allude. By the way, did you say that his name is Kleinkopf, and that he was originally a diamond-thief?'

'He was the most expert diamond-thief in Europe, monsieur,' the officer replied. 'Now, permit me to offer my apologies for the trouble to which I have put you, and to bid you farewell. At the same time, if you will allow me to do so, I will give you a little advice. If I were in your place I should leave this coast as soon as possible.'

'I shall do so within a quarter of an hour, at latest,' Browne replied.

With that the officer saluted once more and disappeared down the companion-ladder. A few moments later his boat was to be seen making her way in the direction of the man-of-war.

Browne stood and watched her, scarcely able to realise that all danger was now passed and done with. Then he turned to go in search of his friends, and as he did so a thought came into his mind, and brought him to a standstill once more. What could the officer have meant when he had said that the escaped convict's name was Kleinkopf, and that he was not a Nihilist, as they had been informed, but a diamond-thief; not a man who plotted and risked his life for the welfare of his country, but a common felon, who lived by defrauding the general public? Was it possible that Katherine's father could have been such a man? No; a thousand times no! He would never believe such a thing. But if it were not so, what did it all mean? Madame Bernstein had recognised the fugitive as Katherine's father, and the man himself had rejoiced at being with his daughter again after so long a separation. There was a mystery somewhere, upon which he would have to be enlightened before very long.

As he arrived at this conclusion Captain Mason approached him.

'The chief-engineer reports that all is ready, sir,' he said. 'If you wish it we can get under way at once.'

'The sooner the better, Mason,' Browne replied. 'I shall not be happy until we have put the horizon between ourselves and that gentleman over there.'

He nodded in the direction of the cruiser, which the boat had just reached.

'I agree with you, sir,' said the captain. 'I will get the anchor away at once.'

'Before you do so, Mason,' said Browne, 'just get those two men out of the tunnel and send them aft. Don't let them come on deck whatever you do. They're certain to have their glasses on us over yonder.'

'Very good, sir,' Mason replied, and went forward to execute his errand.

Anxious as he was to go below, Browne did not leave the deck until the screw had commenced to revolve. When he did it was with a great fear in his heart—one that he would have found it extremely difficult either to describe or to account for. As he argued with himself, it was extremely unlikely that the Russian authorities would make a mistake; and yet, if they did not, why had Madame Bernstein always been so anxious to assure Katherine that the man he had saved was her father? And, what was still more important, why had she fainted that morning when the officer had given his information concerning the fugitive? When he entered the drawing-room, to his surprise, he found Katherine alone there. Her face was, still very white, and it struck Browne that she had been crying.

'What is the matter, dear?' he inquired as he placed his arm round her and drew her towards him. 'Why do you look so troubled?'

'I do not know,' she answered, burying her face in his shoulder, 'but I am very, very unhappy.'

He did his best to soothe her, but without success. A weight was pressing upon her mind, and until it was removed relief would be impossible. For some reason Browne made no inquiry after madame's condition. It seemed, for the moment, as if he had forgotten her very existence. At last he bade Katherine put on her hat and accompany him to the deck. The fresh air would revive her, he said. She accordingly departed to her cabin, and in five minutes rejoined him. In the meanwhile Browne had visited the cabin on the starboard side, and had informed Foote of all that had transpired. Maas was still sleeping quietly in his bunk.

'Thank goodness they've cleared out,' said Jimmy. 'Now our friend here can wake up as soon as he pleases.'

'The sooner the better,' Browne replied. 'In the meantime, Jimmy, I've something awfully important to say to you.'

In a few words Browne told him what he had discovered and what he suspected. Foote listened with attention, and when he had finished, scratched his chin and regarded his own face in the mirror

opposite, looking the very figure and picture of perplexity.

'What did I always tell you?' he said at last. 'I was as certain then as I am now that the woman was playing some underhand game, though what it is I cannot say. However, I'll find out somehow or another. Upon my word, when we return to civilisation I think I shall embark upon the career of a private inquiry agent.'

Feeling that there was nothing more to be said upon the subject just then, Browne left him, and returned to the drawing-room in search of Katherine. He found her ready to accompany him to the deck above.

'The fresh air will soon bring the roses back to your cheeks,' he said as they made their way along the drawing-room in the direction of the companion-ladder.

She was about to reply, when the sound of footsteps reached them from the port alley-way, and, before they had set foot upon the first step, MacAndrew and the fugitive stood before them. Browne noticed that Katherine instinctively shrank away from the latter. He accordingly slipped his arm round her, and, telling MacAndrew that he would like to speak to him in a few minutes, led her to the deck above.

C A R T H A G E.



OF all the great cities of antiquity, Carthage has perhaps the fewest traces to show of the glories of bygone ages. Rome, Athens, Thebes, Palmyra, Ephesus—all can boast of something: temples or mausoleums, inscriptions or sculptures; some remains to aid us in reconstructing the past. But when we stand on the green, breeze-swept plain near Tunis and look around for some trace of Rome's great rival, we think at first that all has indeed, like 'the baseless fabric of a vision,' vanished into nothingness. We can see about us only a rich upland, carpeted with asphodel and crimson pea, below us the blue Mediterranean, and beyond the fantastic peaks of the Zaghonan Mountains; while in the immediate foreground the most prominent object is the glaringly modern Cathedral, the consummation of the life-work of that remarkable man, Cardinal Lavigérier. But if we have patience and search more closely we shall find that a good deal remains which will well repay a careful examination. We must always bear in mind that the site on which we are standing has perhaps seen a more varied succession of civilisations than any other in the world. We have to look not only for what survives of Punic Carthage; we must remember that that was followed by an epoch of Roman domination, which, in its turn, was succeeded by the

period of Byzantine rule, during which Carthage was the central point of Christianity in Africa; and that it was eventually overwhelmed by the wild hordes of Islam, the traces of whose presence are here, as in so many places, entirely of a negative and destructive kind. Finally, we see, in the Cathedral, the Museum, and the Monastery of the Pères Blancs the obtrusive evidence of the last act in the great drama of the destiny of Carthage—the French occupation and protectorate of the Regency of Tunis, a curious tragi-comedy not without its moral, the full account of which may be found in that interesting book, Broadley's *Tunis, Past and Present*.

To begin with ancient Carthage, the Carthage of the *Æneid* and *Salammô* and the Punic Wars, we must first turn to the grassy hillock which tradition tells us was the Byrsa, the original site of the infant city. When the fugitive Dido, with her noble followers, landed on the African shore, she obtained from the natives the concession of a piece of land which could be covered by a bull's hide, whereupon the wily princess cut the hide into strips, so that they enclosed the space of twenty-two stadia. That space, we are told, was the Byrsa. Some walls a little to the north-east of it are said to be the vestiges of the palace of Dido, from which, as she burnt upon her funeral pile, she watched the departure of Æneas and his Trojans. The site of the Forum is pointed out

between the Byrsa and the sea, and a little farther east we come to what are perhaps the most interesting remains of the first Carthage—the Punic tombs. They lie on the slope of a hill some distance below the site of the town, and have only recently been excavated. Each grave consists of a small, solidly-built chamber, with a pent-house roof formed by two massive blocks of stone leaning together, so as to resist the pressure of soil above; each has its arrangements for cremation still complete. Another remarkable feature is the great cisterns; but it is still a moot-point among archaeologists whether they are of Carthaginian or of Roman origin. They consist of a chain of subterranean aqueducts, with here and there large circular reservoirs; but it is supposed that the former are of more recent date, and that Punic Carthage was supplied only with rain-water, which was stored in the cisterns. In these curious underground chambers a tribe of Bedouins have made their abode; and, having walled round the area and constructed a rude mosque, they live there contentedly.

Of Roman Carthage nothing remains but the amphitheatre, which is more than half a mile distant from the site of the Punic city. The elliptical excavation is about forty feet deep, and a few of the stones are still in their places. It was the scene of the massacre of St Perpetua and her companions, who were there thrown to the wild beasts in 203.

Christianity was introduced into Carthage at a very early date, and the ruins of a fine Byzantine basilica are still to be seen. The bases of the columns, and in some cases the columns themselves, remain for the most part intact; and we also noticed a circular immersion-tank. The history of Christian Carthage is a deeply interesting one, associated as it is with the names of St Cyprian the martyr, who was beheaded in the amphitheatre there; of Tertullian and of St Augustine, the last of whom came thither to complete his studies. In his time the see of Carthage numbered over three hundred churches.

During the ebb-tide of the Western Empire, North Africa, like the south of Europe, was devastated by the Vandals, and Genseric established the seat of his power at Carthage. It was from there that he undertook the celebrated expedition in the course of which he sacked Rome, bringing back, amongst countless other treasures, the golden candlesticks and the holy table of the Temple, which had fallen into the hands of Titus at the destruction of Jerusalem. When, a century later, North Africa fell before the power of the Byzantine Empire, Belisarius, its conqueror, carried those priceless relics to Constantinople, whence they were sent by Justinian to the Christian Church of Jerusalem, after which there is no record of their fate. The Byzantine rule was but short-lived, for about the middle of the seventh century the invading hosts of Islam,

ardent in the zeal of a new faith, swept irresistibly over North Africa under the leadership of Abdulla Ibn Sâad, the brother of the Caliph. Legend relates that Gregorius, the Christian governor, had a surpassingly beautiful daughter, who fought by her father's side. Her hand, with one hundred thousand dinars, was offered to the warrior who should slay the Arab commander, the latter retaliating by offering her with the same dowry to whoever should kill or capture the Byzantine prince, her father. After a conflict which lasted several days, Abdulla Ibn Sâad succeeded by a treacherous strategy in overwhelming the Christian army; Gregorius was killed, and his daughter fell into the hands of the victors. Thus the province of Tunis became subject to the Arab race, and the new-comers soon overran it, driving the original Berber inhabitants into the strongholds of the mountains. At first under the nominal rule of the Caliphs, and later under that of the Sublime Porte, the Barbary corsairs were really independent and untamable sea-robbers, able for centuries to defy the great Powers of Christendom. Thousands of Christian slaves lived and died under their cruel thralldom. Cervantes was for five years and a half their prisoner, and describes the miseries he endured in the story of 'The Captive' in *Don Quixote*; while St Vincent de Paul, the noble founder of the mission to the unhappy Christians in the power of the North African pirates, was himself for some years one of their victims.

To return from this long digression to Carthage itself, we have still to notice a rather dilapidated little building standing on the green mound which archaeologists suppose to be the Byrsa or site of the original city. This is the chapel erected in 1841 by Louis Philippe on the ground conceded, ten years before, to Charles X. for that purpose. It is a mean edifice in the wretched pseudo-Gothic of the forties; and now that the Roi de France and the Roi des Français have alike vanished from the scene, and a republic rules in their stead, the poor little monument has rather a shabby and neglected air. Yet the episode which it commemorates is a sufficiently touching one, for it was here that St Louis IX. of France is supposed to have died of fever after his defeat before Tunis, during the siege of that city which was undertaken as the first step of the Seventh Crusade. The memory of the saint receives indeed, nowadays, in this locality, more veneration from Moslems than from Christians, on account of a tradition according to which he became on his deathbed a convert to Islam, and he is revered under the name of Sidi-Bou Saïd.

We can pass by without comment the staring brick Cathedral and the other institutions of the Pères Blancs. The monks of this fraternity, founded by the gifted and enthusiastic Cardinal Lavigérie as a missionary order for work in North Africa, wear the white bernous and the red fez

of the Arabs. We cannot say whether they make many proselytes—the Mohammedan is not an easy man to convert; but they are undoubtedly doing a very noble work in ministering to the sick and the needy without regard to creed or race. One of the order, Père Delattre, has devoted his life to the exploration of the site of Carthage, and the results of his labour are preserved in the Museum, near the Seminary, where we find a very interesting collection of Punic, Roman, and Christian remains. It is curious to note that the Carthaginians, Phœnicians by origin and great traders, appear to have produced no original style of art, their bronzes, pottery, jewellery, &c. showing

curious resemblances in design and ornament to those of Egypt, Etruria, Greece, and other countries with which they doubtless had commercial dealings.

But when all is said and done, the Carthage of the past is no longer to be found on the green plain facing the Zaghanan Hills. If we wish to find her we must seek her elsewhere—in the walls of modern Tunis, in the mosques of Kairwan, in the palaces of Genoa, anywhere and everywhere but in the place that knows her no more. In the words of a recent French writer, 'Carthage, scattered over the whole world, is everywhere, and yet is nowhere.'

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER III.—CAPTAIN BILKER MAKES A PROPOSAL.



BANDERAH, the supreme chief of Mayou, was, *vide* Mr Deighton's report to his clerical superiors, 'a man of much intelligence, not unfavourably disposed to the spread of the Gospel among his perishing people; but, alas! of a worldly nature, and clinging for worldly reasons to the darkness.' In other words, Banderah, although by no means averse to the poorer natives of the island adopting Christianity in a very free and modified form, and contributing a certain amount of their possessions towards the support of the mission, was yet a heathen, and intended, for reasons that Mr Deighton's mind could not grasp, to remain one. For the missionary himself the chief had conceived a personal liking, mingled with a wondering and contemptuous pity. During an intertribal war Banderah had received a Snider bullet in his thigh, which Mr Deighton, after much difficulty, had succeeded in extracting. Consequently his gratitude was unbounded, and he evinced it in a very practical manner, by commanding some hundreds of his subjects to immediately become Christians under pain of death. And being aware that polygamy in a convert would not be tolerated by Mr Deighton, he went a step farther, and decreed all those of the forced converts who were possessed of more than one wife to send the others to his own harem, knowing well that this addition to his family responsibilities would be fully compensated for by the labour of the surplus wives in his yam and taro plantations. Poor Mr Deighton, whose eyes filled with tears of joy when he baptised the converts, knew nothing of this; he firmly believed in his own statement to his superiors, when he said that 'Banderah has shown his gratitude to me, and the dawning of light in his

heart, by making provision for those wives who have been put away.'

In his younger days Banderah had once made a voyage to Sydney in the service of a trading captain, whose name in those days was a name to conjure with from one end of Melanesia to the other, and for whose valour as a fighter and killer of men the young chief had acquired a respect he could never entertain for a missionary. This captain, however, had died in Sydney, full of years and strong drink, and left the almost broken-hearted Banderah to return alone to his island home.

In the chief's curious, savage nature there were many good points, one of which was that he never broke his plighted word. A year or so after Blount's arrival on Mayou, Banderah had yielded to the earnest entreaties of the trader and the missionary, and agreed to put down the last remnants of cannibalism, which still lingered among the coast tribes over whom he ruled. And although the older men and some of the 'witch-doctors,' or priests, had protested strongly against the abandonment of one of the oldest customs on the island, they finally gave in when Blount presented each dissentient with a tomahawk, and Mr Deighton added a dozen highly-coloured and large-sized handkerchiefs illustrating the passage of the Israelites across the Red Sea.

An hour after Blount had set off along the beach to visit his timber-getters at Lak-a-lak, Banderah saw the captain of the schooner come ashore and walk up the path to Nathaniel Burrowes's house, where he was warmly greeted by the American and Schwartzkoff. He remained with them for nearly an hour, then came outside, and looking about him for a few moments, made direct for Banderah's dwelling, which stood about

three hundred yards back from that of the American trader.

When close to the chief's house the captain of the *Island Maid* raised his head, and Banderah caught sight of his features and recognised him.

'How are you, Banderah?' said the seaman, walking quickly up to the chief, who was sitting on a mat inside his doorway, surrounded by his wives and family. 'You haven't forgotten me, have you?'

'Oh no, Cap'en, I no forget you,' said the chief, civilly enough, but without warmth. 'How are you, Cap'en Bilker?'

'Don't call me that now, Banderah. I'm Captain Sykes now.'

'Yes,' and Banderah's face at once assumed an expression of the most hopeless stupidity; 'all right, Cap'en Syke. Come inside my house and sit down.'

'Right, my boy,' said Bilker genially, producing a large flask of Queensland rum. 'I've brought you a drink, Banderah; and I want to have a yarn with you.'

'All right,' and taking the flask from the captain's hand without even deigning to look at or taste its contents, he passed it on to one of his wives. 'What you want to talk to me about, cap'en? You want me catch you some natives to work on plantation?' and he smiled slyly.

'No, no, Banderah. Nothing like that. I don't run a labour-ship now. I am a gentleman now. I'm captain of that yacht.'

The chief nodded, but said nothing. He knew the evil-faced ruffian before him pretty well. Ten years before, the blackbird captain had managed to take thirty of Banderah's people away in his ship without paying for them; and the moment he had recognised the sailor he set his keen brain to work to devise a plan for taking a deadly vengeance.

'Banderah, old man,' continued Bilker, laying one hand on the chief's huge, naked knee, 'I meant to pay you for those people when I came back next trip. You see, as soon as I got 'em aboard bad weather came on, and I had to put to sea; but I meant to come the next morning—true as death, I did—but it came on to blow hard from the westward, and I couldn't beat back to Mayou. And then, the trip after, when I was coming back here from Samoa—to pay you, Banderah—I got took by a man-o'-war'—here Bilker crossed his wrists, to signify that he had been handcuffed—'took me to Sydney, and judge put me in calaboose for ten years.'

'You lie,' said Banderah quietly, but with a danger-spark in his eye; 'that man-o'-war no make you fast [captured him] for a long time after you steal my people. Plenty white men tell me you make two more voyage; then man-o'-war catch you and make you fast.'

'Don't you believe 'em, Banderah,' began the ex-blackbird, when the chief interrupted him.

'What you do with my sister, Cap'en Syke? You take her to Samoa to work on German plantation?'

The white man's face paled. 'I didn't know Nebarra was with the other people till the next morning, Banderah. You see, the mate put the hatches on so quick that I had no chance to see her. Yes, she's in Samoa, Banderah; but I never meant to take Nebarra'—

'All right; never mind talking about Nebarra. But what you want to talk about now, Cap'en?' And then, so as to put his visitor at his ease, he added, 'You — rogue; me — rogue, eh?'

'Yes, yes,' grinned Bilker, again placing his hand on the chief's knee. 'And now look here, Banderah, I'm not only going to pay you for those people I took to Samoa, but I'm going to give you a lot of money as well; not Chili dollars, but gold—English sovereigns. I'm going to make you a big, rich chief—big as Maafu Tonga.* But I want you to help me in return.'

'You speak me true?' inquired the chief.

'Swear it,' answered the captain, extending his hand, which Banderah clasped, his eyes fixed steadily upon the blackbird's face.

After a few moments' silence the chief made a sign for his women and slaves to withdraw to the farther end of the room, so that their muttered talk might not disturb the white man and himself. Then he lit his pipe and said, 'Go on, Cap'en; tell me what you going to give me plenty money for.'

'Look,' said Bilker, moving up closer to the native, and speaking in a low voice; 'these two white men on board the yacht have got any amount of money—gold sovereigns—boxes and boxes of it. They stole it; I know they stole it, although I didn't see them do it.'

Banderah nodded his huge, frizzy head. 'I savee. These two fellow — rogue, all same you and me.'

'Yes,' said Bilker. 'Now look here, Banderah, I mean to have that gold, and I want you to help me to get it. As soon as these two white men on board are dead I will give you a thousand sovereigns—five thousand dollars; and with such a lot of money you can buy rifles and cartridges and as many brass cannons as you want. Why, you can go to Sydney again and buy a little schooner, and come back and fight some of the Solomon Island people. Maafu had a schooner like that, and made himself a big chief in Fiji.'

Banderah nodded his head approvingly, and Bilker went on:

'Then, when the white men are dead, and I have given you the thousand "yellow moneys," I'll go away with the schooner. I believe these men are very bad men, and ought to be killed. Now listen, and I'll tell you how we are going to do it. Nat and Peter are going to help us.'

Then Captain William Bilker, *alias* Sykes, un-

* Maafu, of Tonga, the once dreaded rival of King Caco-bau of Fiji.

folded his plan. Banderah was to entice De Vere and his friend some miles into the interior, where there was a large swamp, the resort of countless wild-fowl. Here they were to be clubbed by Banderah and his people, and their bodies thrown into the swamp. Then Bilker, accompanied by Schwartzköff and Burrowes, were to board the schooner and settle the mate and white steward.

'How many sovereign you going to give Peter and Burrow?' asked Banderah.

'Five hundred each,' answered Bilker—'a thousand between them. But you will get a thousand.'

Banderah appeared to think deeply for a minute; then he asked, 'You no 'fraid man-o'-war catch you by-and-by?'

'No. Who's going to tell about it? You and your people won't.'

'What 'bout Missa Blount? What 'bout missionary?'

Bilker grinned savagely. 'Peter and Burrowes say they will kill Blount if I give them another five hundred sovereigns. If I won't they will leave Mayou in their boats, and go to the Solomon Islands, and find a ship to take them to China.'

'What 'bout missionary—and missionary woman?'

For a moment or two Bilker, crime-hardened villain as he was, hesitated. Then he looked into the dark face of the native chief. Its set, savage expression gave him confidence.

'Plenty of missionaries get killed. And all the man-of-war captains know that the Mayou bushmen [bush tribes] are very savage. Some day—in about a week after I have gone away in the schooner—you will get the missionary and his wife to go with you to the little bush town which Peter and Burrowes tell me he goes to sometimes. They will sleep there that night; you and your people will sleep in the same house with them. You do that sometimes, Banderah, eh?'

'Yes, sometimes.'

This was perfectly true. The bush tribes on Mayou, although at war with Banderah and the coast people, yet occasionally met their foes in an amicable manner at a bush village called Rogga, which for many years had been a neutral ground. Here Banderah and his people, carrying fish, tobacco, and bamboos filled with salt water,* would meet parties of bush people, who, in exchange for the commodities brought by Banderah, would give him yams, pigs, and wild pigeons. At several of these friendly rencontres Mr Deighton had been present, in the vain hope that he might establish friendly relations with

* Having no salt, the bush tribes of Melanesia, who dare not visit the coast, buy salt water from the coast tribes. They meet at a spot which is always sacredly kept as a neutral ground.

these savage and cannibal people of the interior.

'Well,' resumed the ruffian, 'you will sleep at Rogga with the missionary and his wife. In the morning, when you and your people awake, the missionary and his wife will be dead. Then you will come back here and wait for a man-of-war. When she comes you will go on board and tell the captain that the wild bushmen rushed upon your people in the night, and killed the white man and his wife.'

'I savee. Everybody savee Mayou man-a-bush* like kill white man.'

'That's it, Banderah. No one will even say you did it. And very likely the man-of-war captain will send a lot of men ashore and kill as many bushmen as he can find.'

Banderah scratched his woolly head, and again appeared to think deeply. Presently he inquired sharply:

'What 'bout Peter and Burrowes? Suppose by-and-by those two fellow get mad with me some day, and tell man-o'-war captain that me been kill three white man and one white woman, eh?'

'Banderah'—and Bilker slapped the chief on his shoulder—'you're a thunderin' smart fellow! There's no mistake about that. Now look here. I want you to get another thousand sovereigns—the thousand I am going to give Burrowes and Peter. And after the man-a-bush'—he grinned with savage humour—'have killed the missionary and his wife, they will come down here to the beach one night, and will kill the two white men, and take away everything that is in their houses. Then there will be no white men, and you will be the biggest chief in the world—as big as Maafu Tonga, or Apinoka, King of Apamama.'

A curious smile stole over the grim features of the chief.

'Ah, Cap'en Bilker! you savee too much; you very smart man altogether!'

'Well, look here now, Banderah. Are you going to help me, and get all this money?'

'Yes,' was the answer; 'I help you, Cap'en. What you say I mus' do, I do.'

'When?'

'To-morrow.'

'To-morrow will do; the sooner the better. And look here, Banderah, I'm going to give you ten sovereigns for the men I took away from Mayou and didn't pay for.'

'All right,' answered the chief. 'Now you go away. I want to go and look for some men to come along with me to-morrow.'

'Right you are, Banderah. Take plenty of good men with you. You know what to do—white men walk along swamp to shoot duck,

* 'Man-a-bush' (literally, 'man-in-the-bush'), a term applied by the coast natives of Melanesia to all bush-dwelling people.

then *one, two!*' and Captain Bilker made a swift downward motion with his right hand that was perfectly comprehensible to Banderah.

For some minutes the native chief sat quietly on his mat and watched the captain return to Burrowes's house, from which a short time after he emerged, accompanied by the two fellow-conspirators, whose murder he had just planned. Then the three of them hailed the schooner. A boat put off and took them on board. Towards the evening Blount returned along the beach from Lak-a-lak, and walked slowly up the coco-palm-shaded path to his house. Just as he entered his door the sounds of revelry came over to him from the schooner, whose lights were just beginning to glimmer through the quickly-falling darkness of the tropic night. Some one on board was playing an accordion, and presently he caught the words of a song:

'Remember, too, the patriots' gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore;
Maryland; my Maryland.'

'Burrowes only sings that when he's getting very drunk,' he said to himself as he sat down to drink a cup of coffee brought to him by Taya, his eldest daughter. 'No doubt he and that accomplished scoundrel Bilker are having a very happy time together.'

'Father,' said Taya as he put down his cup, 'Banderah is here. He came but now, and will not come inside the house, but waits inside the boat-shed, lest he be seen talking to thee.'

'What the deuce is wrong?' muttered Blount as, without waiting to touch the food prepared for him, he went outside to his boat-shed.

Half-an-hour later he and the native chief came out together, and as they stood for a minute in the broad streak of light that streamed out from the lamp standing on the table in the sitting-room of the trader's house, the gentle Taya, who sat at the doorway, saw that her father's face was set and stern-looking.

'Shed thou no blood, Banderah,' he said in the native tongue, 'not even that of these two men who have eaten and drunk in my house many times.'

'Challi [Charlie], that is hard to promise thee. Already are my people thirsty for the blood of this dog of a captain, he who stole one score and ten of my people. And because of Nebarra, my sister, who was one of them, have I promised them vengeance. But the other two who are with him, and whom he would have me slay, will I spare.'

'As you will. And as for these two here, who have planned to kill me, with them I will deal myself. If, when the schooner saileth away from here, these men go not with her, then I will shoot them dead.'

'Good;' and then, grasping the white man's

hand, the chief pressed his nose to his, and vanished in the darkness.

CHAPTER IV.—'DEATH TO THEM BOTH.'



EARLY on the following morning Messrs De Vere and Morecombe-Lycett, the latter being now quite recovered, informed Mr and Mrs Deighton that, having heard from the two traders there was good shooting at the big swamp, they were going there under the guidance of Banderah and a party of natives; and shortly after breakfast the chief, accompanied by a number of his people, appeared.

'I will send with you two of my best men,' said Mr Deighton, indicating a couple of his pet converts, who stood by.

But suddenly, to Mr Deighton's astonishment, Banderah, with a savage look, bade them stay where they were. He had, he said, plenty of men. They were to stay where they were, and not follow.

Presently the two yachting gentlemen, arrayed in a very stylish sporting get-up, appeared with their breech-loaders and cartridge-belts, and waving their hands gracefully to the missionary and his wife, disappeared with Banderah and his dark-skinned companions into the dense tropical jungle, the edge of which was within a very short distance of the mission-station. For about an hour the Honourable Lycett and De Vere, with Banderah leading the way, walked steadily onward through the jungle. Not a word was spoken among the natives, who followed close at their heels; and Banderah himself, in answer to their frequent questions, replied only by monosyllables.

At last they came out of the stifling heat of the thick jungle, and saw before them a great, reedy swamp, its margin fringed by a scanty growth of coco-nut and pandanus palms. Out upon the open patches of water here and there showing upon the broad expanse of the swamp, they saw large flocks of wild-duck, feeding and swimming about, betraying not the slightest fear at their approach.

'By Jove, Baxter!' said De Vere to his friend, 'looks good enough, doesn't it? I wonder if these beastly niggers will go in for us.'

'Of course they will. But let us have a drink first. Here, you, bring us that basket. I wonder what sort of tucker the missionary has given us. He's not a bad old sort of an ass. His wife, too, isn't bad.'

'Bah!'—and De Vere twirled his long, yellow moustache—'you're always finding out something nice in the face of every woman you come across. Wait until we get up to Japan; then you will see a new type of woman. Be a bit of a change for you after the Melbourne and Sydney peroxidised-hair bar beauties. Here, nigger, hand me that corkscrew.'

'I say, Dalton,' suddenly remarked his friend, 'pon my soul I believe we are making a mistake in going to Japan. You may be sure that we'll have a lot of trouble before us there.'

'Not a bit of it. Before we get there every one will have read the cable news that we have been seen in Callao, and no one in Yokohama will ever think of associating Mr Herbert De Vere and the Honourable Morecombe-Lycett, just arrived from Manila, *via* Singapore, in the Spanish mail-steamer, with—er—hum—the two gentlemen who arrived at Callao from Tahiti, after successfully diddling the Australian banks of thirty thousand quid.'

'But what are we going to do with the schooner at Manila?'

'Sell her, my innocent; sell her to our esteemed friend, Mr Moses Steinberg, who has assisted me in previous transactions (before I had the pleasure of meeting my present valued colleague, the Honourable Morecombe-Lycett), and who is now taking care to inform the world that we are living in South America.'

'And how are we going to account for our boxes of sovereigns? Two mining speculators don't usually carry about heavy sums in gold.'

'All managed, my boy. My friend, Mr Moses Steinberg, will see to that. The ten thousand sovereigns will be valuable gold specimens from Queensland, and will be placed on board the German Lloyd's steamer at Singapore for safe conveyance to London, where you and I, my dear boy, will follow it. And there also we shall find, I trust, an additional sum of fifteen thousand lying to our credit, the proceeds of our honest toil.'

'What are you going to do with Sykes?'

'Give him five hundred pounds, and tell him to hold his tongue. He's a thundering rascal, and we must pay to shut his mouth.'

Then the two English gentlemen proceeded to discuss their lunch; and as they ate and drank and talked and laughed, Banderah and three or four of his men whispered together.

'Seize them from behind and bind them tightly,' said the chief; 'but kill them not, for that have I promised to Challi.'

The Honourable Morecombe-Lycett had just finished his last glass of bottled beer, and wanted

to smoke. He had taken out his cigar-case, and, wondering at the sudden silence which had fallen upon their native guides, turned round to see where they were, and saw swiftly advancing upon himself and his companion some half-a-dozen stalwart natives. In that momentary glance he read the danger, and, quick as lightning—for he was no coward—he seized his loaded gun, which lay beside him, and fired both barrels, one after another.

A chorus of savage yells answered the shots, and two of the natives fell; but ere he could reload or Dalton could fire there came a fierce rush of all the dark-skinned men upon them, and struggling madly for their lives, they were borne down.

And then the lust of slaughter overcame their fierce assailants, and despite Banderah and two or three of his most trusted men, a club was raised and fell swiftly upon the white, fair forehead of De Vere, as he sought to tear away his hands from the vice-like grip of two huge natives who held them.

'Death to them both!' cried a thin-faced, wrinkled old man. '*Hutua** for the lives of the thirty-and-one!' Then, springing out from the rest, he swung a short-handled, keen-bladed hatchet over his head, and sank it into the brain of the wretched Baxter.

'Stand thou aside, Banderah, son of Baylap,' screamed the old man, waving the bloody hatchet fiercely at him. 'I, old Toka the priest, will to-day again show the men of Mayou how to drink the blood and eat the flesh of the white men the gods have given into our hands;' and again he buried the weapon in Baxter's breathless body.

And as Banderah looked at the old man's working face, and saw the savage mouth, flecked with foam, writhing and twisting in horrible contortions, and then looked at the almost equally dreadful visages of the rest of his men, he knew that the old, old lust for human flesh had come upon them. So, with the one idea of saving Blount and the missionary and his wife, he turned and fled through the forest towards the beach.

* Synonymous with Maori *utu*; 'revenge.'

WHO IS THE LEGAL OWNER OF TREASURE TROVE?



SOME one has remarked that there is a good deal of the detective in every one of us; and it might be said, too, that every man has something of the buried treasure-seeker in him. Who is there who has not dreamed of finding, like Legrand in *The Gold Beetle*, some glorious golden *cachet*, buried in ages

past by a Captain Kidd or lying fathoms deep amongst the rotting bones of some old Spanish galleon? Who has not envied the luck of the world-renowned 'Monte Cristo' and the fortunate heroes of *Treasure Island*? The simplicity or fancifulness of poor old Whang, the miller, who was ruined by his fatal lust for buried treasure, is after all only a phase of humanity in general.

Every one is possessed, consciously or unconsciously, with the hope of one day coming on the little green fairy man or *leprechaun* who, as the Irish peasant will tell you, can point out as easily as he can wink where crocks of gold galore are to be found for the digging.

Unfortunately, however, in these countries there is a certain matter-of-fact legal liability connected with the discovery of buried treasure which neutralises largely the romance and absorbs the profitableness of such an event. It is a liability that ought to be more widely known in view of the fact that ignorance of the law is no excuse for a breach of the law, and may be defined in the quaint language of an old law-book as follows: 'When any money, gold, silver plate, or bullion is found in any place, and no man knoweth to whom the property is, then the property thereof belongeth to the king, and that is called treasure trove.' It does not matter where the treasure is found—whether buried in the ground, or hidden in the roof or walls of a castle, or in the trunk of an old tree; so long as the original owner is unknown, it is treasure trove and belongs to the Crown. However, the ambition of the industrious treasure-seeker is not absolutely limited in every direction by this rule, for we have it on the authority of no less a person than Coke that treasure found in the sea belongs to the finder and not to the Crown; but whether this rule applies within the three-mile limit of British jurisdiction over the sea or only outside that limit is still a matter for judicial decision.

In England it is the duty of every person who finds any treasure to make his discovery known to the coroner of the county in which it is found, and that individual must then, in obedience to an old statute of the reign of Edward I., hold an inquest on the find, just as he would on the body of a person who had died under suspicious circumstances. The jurisdiction of a coroner at such an investigation is more honorary than useful. It is limited to the inquiry as to who were the finders of the treasure, and who is suspected thereof. He has no power to inquire into the title of the Crown to the treasure, or decide any question of ownership as between the Crown and a private claimant. This point was decided by the courts in the year 1892. A farmer's son found some silver plate, consisting of three cups, one chalice, two pyxes, and one paten, worth altogether about eighty pounds, buried in the earth upon a farm at Stoke Prior in Herefordshire. The coroner duly held an inquest on these articles before a jury, who found unanimously that they were treasure trove. A claim to them was put forward by the Crown, and they were claimed also by Mr J. H. Arkwright, the lord of the manor, who insisted that he was entitled to such treasure trove by virtue of a deed of the year 1620, made by James I. in favour of the Marquis of Buckingham, under

whom Mr Arkwright held title. The coroner was proceeding to investigate this dispute, but the superior courts restrained him, holding that such questions of ownership must be reserved for a higher tribunal.

So the finding of abandoned treasure in the shape of gold or silver in coin, plate, or bullion is not such a piece of good luck as might be supposed. Any one who makes such a discovery and conceals it from the knowledge of the Crown commits a misdemeanour, and is liable to fine or imprisonment. Indeed, the punishment for such an offence was formerly nothing less than death. It is immaterial whether the offender actually found the treasure himself or got it from another who had found it, but who was ignorant of its value.

This principle was exemplified by the leading case of the *Queen v. Thomas and Willett*, decided in 1863, the facts of which are interesting. A man named Thomas Butcher, a labourer in the employment of a farmer at Mountfield in Sussex, was ploughing a field one fine day, when his ploughshare threw up a long piece of metal like brass, with a trumpet at each end, and doubled up like a coil of string. There were several other similar pieces in the same furrow, the whole weighing altogether eleven pounds. Butcher, who had very little imagination, thought nothing of the find, and allowed the metal to lie at the bottom of the field till evening, when he carried it home, thinking it to be the discarded ornaments of some gentleman's hall or parlour. Subsequently he mentioned the matter casually to an acquaintance named Thomas, who, after taking a look at the so-called brass, and consulting with his brother-in-law, Willett, went to Butcher's house with a pair of scales and a great show of honesty, and bought the metal at the rate of sixpence a pound—five-and-sixpence for the lot. The ploughman heard nothing more of the transaction until his acquaintances began to annoy him by inquiring jestingly if he had found any more old brass lately, and then it leaked out that Thomas and Willett had sold the 'brass' to a firm of gold-refiners in Cheapside for £529, 13s. 7d. The Crown took the matter up, an inquest was held by the coroner, and Thomas and Willett were at once arrested. Butcher, whose simplicity had saved him from temptation, was an innocent finder; but the prisoners, who, knowing how the metal had been found, had bought it as brass and sold it for their own benefit as gold, were convicted on the evidence and punished severely.

In Thomas and Willett's case the coroner held an inquest on the metal before the prisoners were prosecuted; but such a proceeding is not absolutely necessary in order to make the misdemeanour complete and punishable. According to the evidence in an Irish case of the year 1867, two labourers named Toole and Ryan were making a sewer in a yard in Booterstown, near Dublin,

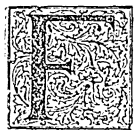
and they had got to a depth of about two feet and a half, when their picks came in contact with an earthenware crock buried in the ground. They split it open, and found it to contain a great number of old silver coins of the time of Elizabeth, Charles I., and the Commonwealth, which the astounded labourers determined to appropriate. Ryan kept a lookout in the yard while Toole gathered up the hoard; then they went into Dublin and sold a number of the coins to a jeweller for £1, 2s. 6d., of which sum Ryan got half-a-sovereign. It may be conjectured that he was dissatisfied with the way in which he had been treated by his fellow-conspirator, for very soon afterwards the police came to know of the affair, and Toole was arrested and tried. His counsel, Mr Curran, argued ingeniously that, as no inquest had first been held by the coroner to determine the ownership of the coins, the indictment and prosecution could not stand; but this point was overruled. The remainder of the coins had been found hidden in a mat-

tress in poor Toole's bedroom, and on the evidence of the faithless Ryan he was convicted and sentenced.

It is pretty certain, however, that to some extent the law on this subject is a dead letter. Articles of great value and antiquarian interest—gold and silver plate, coins, ornaments, utensils, and the like—are constantly being discovered in odd out-of-the-way places, but very seldom indeed are they voluntarily handed over to the Crown. If a man by his own unaided industry or good fortune finds some old hoard, say of coin or plate, that belongs to no one, it is too much to expect from his respect for the law that he will give all up to the State—especially as it is the easiest thing in the world to keep the knowledge of such a find to himself. The truth is, the moral sense of the community is not at all in accordance with the principles of the law of treasure trove, and consequently that law is more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

A SNAKE FIGHT. COMIC ENDING OF A TRAGEDY.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.



FANCY! two men—gray-haired men, too, and clergymen to boot—standing three precious hours to watch a fight between two snakes; and one of the two now sitting down, eight thousand miles away from the scene

to write the story of it, without any becoming sense of remorse or shame, but with the audacious hope that some readers of a journal which has relieved many a long and wearisome journey may not only read it with indulgence, but find in it some enjoyment.

It was in Australia, and in the fall of the year. My friend and I were returning from a tour which had carried us far into the bush, as the forests of gum-trees and scrub are there called. We were walking through a clearing, when the unmistakable rattle of a snake arrested us; and in a few minutes we saw the beginning of a fierce encounter between two deadly enemies—a black snake and a rattle. These two branches of the snake family are hereditary and implacable foes; though what was the origin of the feud Darwin saith not. Between them there can be neither fellowship, amity, compromise, nor even armed neutrality. War to the death is their unalterable law from generation to generation. The black snake is much smaller than the rattle, but he is a terribly formidable foe; and, as science is superior to mere size or strength, he generally comes out of the fray victorious. He seems to

'scent the battle (or rather the rattle) from afar,' and gives himself no rest until he gains a point of vantage from which he can make a sudden swoop upon the noisy foe. On this occasion we did not see the black snake until he leaped 'on the rattle's throat, nor could we afterwards make out how he had got so near without being seen. That power of silent, stealthy, rapid movement gives the black fellow an immense advantage over the rattling enemy. It is that, indeed, on which his hope of victory mainly depends. Let the blacky by a sudden leap grasp the throat of the unwary rattle, and the chances are he will never let go again 'until death them do part;' but if that first chance be lost, and the two meet in fair fight, after fair warning, the fangs of the rattle are pretty sure to gain *him* the victory. In this instance no such misfortune was the blacky's. He made his spring and got his grip of the throat, and there he held on 'like grim death.' With a fury that was sometimes awful, the rattle wriggled and shook, and rolled and writhed. He leaped into the air, twisted and tossed himself about, banged his assailant down on the ground, rolled on him and over him; but all in vain. Blacky simply *stuck*. Nothing could move him, nothing tempt him or compel him to relax his hold for a single moment. To have done so would have been almost certain death to himself; but, through all the rearings, leapings, tossings, writhings, and hissings of his victim, on he held

with a relentless tenacity that was equal only to his love of his own life and his hate of his foe's.

Thus, for more than an hour and a half the life-and-death game was kept up without a minute's intermission, and without any sign of weakening on either side. Then we perceived that the rattle's strength seemed to be giving way; and all of a sudden he coiled himself up and lay still, as if to die. Whether it was from sheer exhaustion, or only a ruse to deceive his enemy, a faint or a feint, we were not sure. We thought it was the former; but blacky evidently thought otherwise. He understood his enemy better than we did, and did not mean to be tricked. Down he lay by the side of the prostrate victim, but with his teeth firmly set in the now torn and crumpled throat. Then, after a quiet interval, the one-sided truce having come to an end, or the ruse having failed, the rattle rose again and resumed the unequal struggle with the energy of desperation—a supreme struggle for life. Again he reared and rolled and coiled, and darted up and down, forward and backward, carrying his enemy with him in all his contortions, trying by every conceivable twist to get his fangs into the merciless foe; but all in vain. Then we began to see in the poor victim renewed signs of failing strength; but, notwithstanding increasing weakness, he struggled for a time continuously, then intermittingly, until, more than two and a half hours after the first attack, the poor rattle gave up the contest, and lay down to die. This time it was no ruse. The poor fellow was done for, and within ten or fifteen minutes after the mute surrender he yielded up the ghost. But even then blacky still stuck, and it was not until the corpse began to stiffen that he for the first time withdrew the nails which had been driven nearly three hours before into the sure place—the throat of the unhappy rattle.

Then, the tragedy being ended, the comedy began; and a comedy indeed it was, at any rate to the two spectators. On the part of the victor there was no sign of triumph, no dancing round the prostrate enemy; but with all possible staidness and straightforwardness the hero prepared for the celebration of his victory. He began by stretching and straightening out the lifeless body, smoothing out every crease and every wrinkle on its scaly surface, with what intent we could not even guess. He seemed to have assumed the rôle of undertaker, and to be preparing the corpse for decent burial, magnanimous towards a brave though defeated foe. Not a twist or wrinkle was left upon the carcass from tip to toe, from nose to outstretched tail. Then, to our greater bewilderment, we saw that he was licking the body from end to end, making straight parallel lines of saliva along its entire length, which, with the rays of the setting sun falling on it, exhibited all its varied hues, and made us long for its possession, that

we might carry it away with us. But the darky had something better to do than indulge a benevolent sentiment for our gratification. For ten minutes or more he continued his preparations, until he had made four or five streaks of saliva, which shone like satin ribbons, laid horizontally on the dead body from end to end. Then blacky rose and shook himself, and, having done so, took up his position at the head of his victim and calmly gazed upon him, with the first gleam of satisfaction in his bright little eye. We were still full of wonder and conjecture as to his purpose, interment of some kind being the only thing we yet thought of. But then we saw him calmly open his mouth to its utmost capacity, and take into it the entire head of the defunct rattler; then he gulped and swallowed; then rested; then another gulp and another swallow; and so on until he had tucked into him the whole body, a foot longer than himself; and then, with the tip of the tail still dangling from his mouth, he dragged himself into the scrub, and thence probably into a gully, there to spend a month or more digesting his ponderous meal, and 'fighting the battle o'er again' in blissful dreams.

PARTING.

OVERHEAD, a great aurora,
Flashing all among the stars,
From its wide arch in the northward
Flinging up its opal bars.

Round, the dim lights of the city,
Distant sound of harp and song,
Sat we in the shadowed garden
Speaking of our parting long;

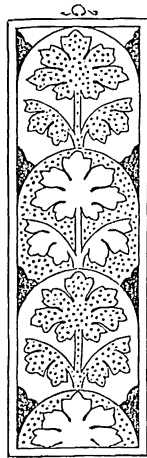
Wondering of the unknown future,
What for us it held in store—
Sweetest meeting like the present,
Or farewell for evermore?

Whether, with earth's lights around us,
We should clasp each other's hand;
Or, beyond these narrow limits,
In yon vast mysterious land,

Spirit met with spirit, knit up
Threads of life that broke below,
Telling in each other's bosom
All the trouble and the woe?

Happy in the recollection
Of the fated hour we met,
Perfect love and peace succeeding
Every longing and regret.

T. P. JOHNSTON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE BORDERS OF CIVILISATION.

To what better place, then, can the tired man go? There he will find refreshment and repose. There the wind blows out on him from another century.—ALEXANDER SMITH.

WE arrived in primitive fashion, for it was half-past ten on a cloudy August night when two footsore tramps reached the little clachan—the goal of our hundred-mile walk. Dark as it was, we could not mistake the inn. It was the only two-storied building in the place, except the schoolhouse, and that stood back from the high-road in academic seclusion, while the inn lay full in the way of all passers-by, though these were at most a handful. We had been given up for that night; but still it was not long before we were sitting, each perched on her bed, recklessly drinking strong tea, congratulating ourselves that we had 'done it,' and speculating as to what daylight would reveal. For one of us had never seen the place before (if, indeed, it is not Irish to speak thus of an arrival in pitch-darkness), and the other had had but one hasty glimpse, a year earlier, of the wild scenery surrounding the little cluster of black cabins; but that glimpse had been sufficient to raise the desire to see more of the spot, to inveigle a companion into the adventure, and to bring us, as you shall see, to the very borders of civilisation.

Such was the prelude to an existence which to-night feels like a dream, and which even at the time seemed like an enchantment. Think, if you can, of a place where time is absolutely of no value, and where the rule of life is to rise when you are sufficiently awake, to go out when sunshine and fresh air call you, to return for food when you are hungry, to lie down and to sleep when limbs are weary and eyelids close. We never knew the hour of the clock, and we never needed to. Here were no engagements, no trains, no regular posts; nothing that bound you to punctuality or energy of any kind. We used to get up (or think about it) when we heard the schoolmaster's horn calling in his barelegged troop from over the hills—the horn being simply a large

spiral shell washed on to the shore by some tropical current, and ingeniously turned to use by breaking off its point. We began to make acquaintances as soon as we crossed the threshold that first day, and we soon got to know everybody in the place. Were we not the first strangers who had ever stayed there, and was not our appreciation of it a ready passport to favour?

It was strange how much there was to see, too. From the high-road a passer-by looked over nothing but bleak moorland, culminating on the south in jagged ridges piled one above the other; while to the north lay peat-bog and meadow, and a 'nothingness' beyond which betokened the neighbourhood of the sea. Our first explorations were in this direction. Once safely through the oozy peat, we raced over the short turf which sloped gently down, and suddenly found ourselves looking into space, with a foaming sea breaking into dazzling white surf, full three hundred feet below us. For some miles there was no possible way of descending the cliffs; but later on our good friends the salmon-fishers showed us such wonders of water-worn architecture as made us hold our breath in awe-stricken delight.

Those were delicious hours when we rowed from net to net, watching the men as they hauled in the strong meshes, and the silvery monsters came writhing to the surface. The black cliffs, with their still deeper shadows, barred our vision landward; but elsewhere blue water was round us, and we knew that Greenland would be our first stopping-place could we follow the setting sun. Wonderful caves these men showed us, running far under the land, so that you could hear the muffled roar of the in-coming tide as you lay, out of sight of the water, on the grass above. How delightful, too, were these sturdy fishermen themselves! There was old Macdonald—there is always a Macdonald in the Island of Mist where two or three are gathered together; there was the silent giant who smiled quietly when we spoke, but who would not trust himself in a foreign tongue; there was Aléck the boy, and Rory

McFie—Rory the glib of tongue and ever laughing—Rory the black-eyed, the singer, the flatterer—though, indeed, our finest compliment came from old Macdonald. It was a rough day, when the men hesitated about taking us. 'Why not?' quoth he. 'The lassies are just like ourselves,' and that settled it—in we were flung next time the swell brought up the boat within jumping distance of the black basalt. But I must not forget our other friends: the postman, who strolled up some time or other every day with our mails in his coat-pocket. We must have doubled his work, and we frequently exhausted his supply of stamps, for the nearest office was eleven miles off, and he never could remember to bring us money-orders. He took back our written letters, and so saved us a two-mile walk to the barn with a slit in the wall which served as post-office (a word with no equivalent in the native tongue), where the cows showed a feminine curiosity as to your movements which was alarming until you became accustomed to it. Other institutions were on as primitive a scale. There was certainly a school, but we had no telegraph, no doctor, and no church; we were twenty-six miles from a reel of cotton, and more than fifty from a railway. And we did not miss any of them. On fine evenings we would go fishing with the aforesaid postman, or else rambling over the moor and scrambling down cliffs with the schoolmaster, who was our chief companion. He it was who taught us to eat the dulse so cunningly hidden under overhanging seaweed; he, too, who showed us the witch-stone where the milkmaids still pour libations to an otherwise forgotten god; and it was with him that we discovered that clump of white heather which we could just surround with our outstretched arms. I wonder if he has kept the oath we all swore, to conceal its hiding-place. In contrast to this handsome Norseman was Jamie Macdonald, the big navy just home from

digging canals in Mexico. Poor Jamie! I wonder in what country you are toiling to-day, and if you ever think of our climb up steep Quirang, and how you set off, after a look at your compass, in the twilight, making a bee-line for home through the bog. And do you remember the day I just saved myself from slipping over the grassy slope of Duntulm Island on to the rocks below, and clung desperately to a saving stone, and your spring from the gunwale of the boat, and your climb to help me? I remember, too, though you may not, how neatly you footed it at the nightly reel in the kitchen with yellow-haired Annie Nicholson as your partner. She married the quiet MacPherson—did she not?—after breaking your heart among many others. Many little stories such as this we saw begun or ended at our 'social evenings,' when the schoolmaster led the revels, and we would sit round singing each in turn, or else dance reels to the music of Somerled's concertina. Other nights, and on rainy days too, we read much and wrote more, and made wild efforts to pick up the soft, elusive tongue of the country; and I learnt to spin, taught by the sweetest of old women—old, though her hair was raven and her back unbent. Her dark skin and her features were of a type rapidly dying out, betokening a race which they say is pre-Celtic in origin. Certainly she always impressed us as weirdly old-world, even in this atmosphere of the past. Where is she now, I wonder? Has she forgotten the happy girls who taught her all the English she knew, and who cherish her memory as the most beautiful thing in that land of sleepy delight?

Has anything changed since we left the place that dark night, after the *deoch-an-dorus* on the doorstep? I should fear to return; yet if time can stand still anywhere, surely—surely it must be there, among the basalt cliffs and the peat-bog, and in the company of those simple-hearted men and women.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXX.



THEIR first business when they reached the deck was to glance in the direction whence they had last seen the cruiser. Then she had been a living and very present reality to them; now she was only a tiny speck upon the horizon, and in a quarter of an hour, or even less, would have vanished altogether. They made their way aft to the taffrail, and stood there leaning on the rail, looking at her. Both felt that it was a crisis in their lives that had to be tidied over, and knew that if ever they desired to be happy together they must fight the next ten minutes on

their merits. For this reason, perhaps, they began by being unusually silent. It was Katherine who spoke first.

'Dearest,' she commenced very slowly, 'I want you to listen to me and not to speak until I have finished. I have something to say to you, and I don't quite know how to say it. I don't want you to think that I am capricious, or that I think only of myself. In this I am thinking of you, and of your happiness only.'

'I can quite believe that,' Browne replied, trying to force down the lump that was rising in his throat. 'But I must hear you out before I can say more. What is it you have to say to me?'

'I want you'—here she paused as if she were fighting for breath—'I want you to give up any idea of marrying me, and to put me ashore at the first port at which you call. Will you do this?'

Nearly a minute elapsed before Browne replied. When he did his voice was curiously husky.

'Katherine,' he said, 'this is just like you. It is like your noble nature to try and make my path smoother, when your own is so difficult that you can scarcely climb it. But you don't, surely, suppose that I should do what you ask—that I should give you up and allow you to go out of my life altogether, just because you have been tricked as I have been?'

She glanced up at him with a face as white as the foam upon which they looked. What she would have replied I cannot say; but at that moment MacAndrew, accompanied by Jimmy Foote, appeared on deck. The latter approached them and asked Browne if he could spare him a few minutes. Not being averse to any proposal that would tend to mitigate the severity of the ordeal he was then passing through, Browne consented.

'What is it you want with me?' he asked, as savagely as if he were being deliberately wronged. 'For Heaven's sake, Jimmy, be easy with me! You can have no idea what the strain of the last few minutes has been.'

'I know everything, my son,' said Jimmy quietly. 'Do you think I haven't been watching you of late? That is exactly what I am here for. Poor old boy, you've been on the rack a shade too long lately; but I think I can put that right if you'll only let me. I've great news for you.'

'I don't know what sort of news you can have that will be acceptable to me,' said Browne lugubriously. 'I'm carrying about as much just now as I can possibly manage. What is it?'

'Do you think you're altogether fit to hear it?' he asked. 'And what about Miss Petrovitch? Can you leave her for a few moments?'

'I will speak to her,' Browne replied, and accordingly went back to Katherine. A moment later he rejoined Foote.

'Now then, what is it?' he asked almost fiercely. 'What fresh treachery am I to discover?'

'Come to the smoking-room,' Jimmy replied. 'I can't tell you here on deck, with all the world trying to overhear what I have to say.'

When they reached the cabin in question Browne discovered MacAndrew there, sitting on one of the marble tables and smoking a cigarette.

'I don't know what you think about it, Mr Browne,' said the latter; 'but it strikes me now that we have come very well out of that little encounter with our Muscovite friend over yonder. The idea they've got in their heads is that the runaway and myself are not on board; and if I know anything of their tactics, they will patrol

the coast for the next week or ten days in the expectation of your coming back to pick us up.'

'I wish them joy of their stay,' Browne replied. 'By the time they're tired of it we shall be safely out of reach. But what is it you have to say to me, Jimmy? You didn't bring me here to talk about the cruiser, I suppose?'

'I did not,' said Jimmy, with a great show of importance. 'I brought you to talk about something far more interesting. Look here, old man. I don't, of course, know what your feelings may be; but I've got a sort of a notion that—well, to put it in plain words—that you're none too pleased with your prospective father-in-law. He doesn't quite come up to your idea of the man whom you had been told suffered martyrdom for his country's good—eh?'

'I have never said that I disapproved of him,' Browne replied. 'I don't know why you should have got this notion into your head.'

'You're very loyal, I must say, old man,' continued Jimmy; 'but that cat won't fight—not for an instant. Any one could see that. No, no; I know as well as if you had told me that you're as miserable as a man can well be, and so is Miss Petrovitch. I don't wonder at it. I expect I should be as bad if I were likely to be blessed with such a papa. I should be inclined to wish him back again in the wilds of Saghalien.'

'Oh, for Heaven's sake, get on with what you've got to say!' cried Browne. 'Why do you keep me on the rack like this?'

Jimmy, however, was not to be hurried. He had never had such a hand to play before, and he was determined to make the most of it.

'It was MacAndrew there who made the discovery,' he said. 'I only came in at the end, like the Greek Chorus, to explain things. The fact of the matter is, Browne, when our friend here and the little red-haired gentleman were shut up together in the tunnel, the former elicited the information (how he managed it I am not prepared to say) that the name of the ex-convict is not Polowski or Petrovitch, but Kleinkopf; that he is not a Nihilist, as we have been led to believe, but a diamond-thief of the first water.'

He paused to hear what Browne would say, and, if the truth must be confessed, he was mortified to find that the other betrayed no sort of surprise.

'I know all that,' said his friend. 'Have you discovered nothing else?'

'A heap more,' replied Jimmy; 'but perhaps you know that too. Are you aware that the convict is the famous Red Rat, who once defied the united police of Europe? Well, he is! He is also—and mark you, this is the greatest point of all—he is no less a person than *Madame Bernstein's husband*!'

'Madame Bernstein's husband?' cried Browne, in stupefied surprise. 'What on earth do you mean by that? I warn you not to joke with me. I'm not in the humour for it.'

'I'm not joking,' Jimmy replied, with all gravity. 'I'm telling you this in deadly earnest. The Red Rat is Madame Bernstein's husband. He was sentenced to transportation for life in St Petersburg, was sent to Siberia, and later on was drafted to Saghalien.'

'Is this true, MacAndrew?' inquired Browne. 'You should know.'

'It is quite true,' said MacAndrew. 'For my part, I always thought he was the man you were trying to rescue. If you will look at it you will find that he tallies exactly with madame's description of the man we wanted?'

'Oh heavens! how we have been deceived!' groaned Browne. Then, as another thought struck him, he added, 'But if this is so, then Miss Petrovitch's father is still in captivity.'

'No,' said MacAndrew; 'he has escaped.'

'What do you mean? When did he escape?'

'He is dead. He died early last year.'

A silence that lasted upwards of five minutes fell upon the trio.

'The more I think of it the farther I am from understanding it,' Browne said at last. 'Why should I have been signalled out for the task of rescuing this man, in whom I don't take the least bit of interest?'

'Because you are rich,' said Jimmy. 'Why, my dear fellow, it's all as plain as daylight, now that we've got the key to the puzzle. Madame was aware that Miss Petrovitch would do anything to rescue her father, and so would the man she loved. Therefore, when you, with your money, your influence, and, above all, your yacht, came upon the scene, she took advantage of the opportunity Providence had sent her, and laid her plans accordingly. You know the result.'

'And while Miss Petrovitch has been wearing her heart out with anxiety to save her father, this heartless woman has been deceiving her—to whom she owes everything—and adapting our means to secure her own ends.'

'It looks like—does it not?' said Jimmy. 'Now, what do you intend doing? Remember, you have two traitors to deal with—Madame Bernstein and Mr Maas.'

'I don't know what to do,' replied poor Browne. 'It is sufficiently vexatious. I shall have to tell Miss Petrovitch, and it will break her heart. As for Maas, we must consider what is best to be done with him. I'll have no mercy on the brute.'

'Oh yes, you will,' said Jimmy. 'Whatever you are, you are not vindictive, Jack. Don't try to make me believe you are.'

Leaving the two men together, Browne went in search of his sweetheart. When he found her, he

summed up all the courage he possessed and told her everything from the beginning to the end. She was braver than he had expected, and heard him out without comment. Only when he had finished she rose from her seat, and asked him to excuse her, saying that she would go to her cabin for a little while.

A little before sunset that afternoon a small brig was sighted, five miles or so away to the south-west. A course was immediately shaped to intercept her. Her attention having been attracted, she hove to and waited for the boat that Mason warned her he was sending. When she put off the third officer was in charge, and MacAndrew was sitting beside him in the stern sheets. They returned in something under an hour, and immediately on his arrival on board MacAndrew made his way to the smoking-room, where he was closeted with Browne for upwards of an hour. After that he went below with Jimmy Foote.

The orb of day lay like a ball of fire upon the horizon when they reappeared. This time they escorted no less a person than Maas himself, who looked as if he were scarcely awake. Without inquiring for them or asking leave to bid his host and hostess farewell, he disappeared down the accommodation-ladder, and took his place in the boat alongside, and his traps were bundled in after him. Half-an-hour later the boat returned, but this time Maas was not in her. MacAndrew ascended to the deck, and once more made his way to the smoking-room. He found Browne and Jimmy there as before.

'They will land him at Tomari in the Kuriles in three months' time,' he reported, with what appeared to be considerable satisfaction.

'Tomari is the capital of Kunashiri Island,' said Jimmy, who had turned up a copy of the *China Sea Directory* during the short silence that followed. 'It has a permanent population of about one thousand five hundred souls, which is largely increased in summer-time by fishermen.'

'You are sure he will be quite safe,' said Browne. 'Scoundrel and traitor though he is, I shouldn't like to think that any harm would befall him.'

'You need not be afraid,' replied MacAndrew. 'He is quite able to look after himself. Besides, the skipper is an old friend of mine, and a most respectable person. He will take every care of him, you may be sure. You have paid him well enough to make it worth his while.'

After that, for the remainder of the voyage, the name of Maas was never mentioned by any of the party. Even to this day Browne scarcely likes to hear it spoken. Nor does he permit himself to dwell very often upon what happened a few days later, when, after a most uncomfortable interval, the yacht rounded Hakodate Headland and came to an anchor in the harbour.

'Leave everything to me,' said MacAndrew when

he went into the smoking-room to bid Browne farewell. 'I know how painful an interview would be for you all, and I think you can very well dispense with it. I believe they are ready to go ashore.'

'In that case, let them go. I never wish to see their faces again.'

'I can quite understand it; and now I must bid you farewell myself. I am sorry our adventure has not turned out more successfully; but at any rate you have had a run for your money, and you have seen something of life in the Far East.'

'I have indeed,' said Browne. 'Now, tell me of the arrangements you have made concerning these two miserable people. What will happen to them eventually?'

'They can do as they think best,' replied MacAndrew. 'They can either stay here or go wherever they please. The Nippon Yusen Kwaisha Line call here thrice weekly; and from Yokohama you can reach any part of the known world.'

'But they are practically penniless,' said Browne. Then, taking an envelope from his pocket, he handed it to MacAndrew. 'If you can find an opportunity of delivering it, will you contrive to let them have this. There is something inside that will keep the wolf from the door, for a time at least.'

MacAndrew looked at him a little curiously. He was about to say something, but he checked himself, and, stowing the envelope away in his pocket, held out his hand.

'You were not inclined to trust me when first we met; but I hope you are satisfied now that I have done my best for you.'

'I am more than satisfied,' replied Browne. 'I am very grateful. I wish you would let me do something to help you in return.'

'You have helped me,' MacAndrew answered. 'You have helped me amazingly; more perhaps than you think. Now, good-bye, and may good-luck and every happiness go with you.'

'Good-bye,' said Browne; and then the tall, graceful figure passed along the deck in the direction of the main companion-ladder. A few moments later the sound of oars reached his ears; and when they could no longer be heard Browne went in search of Katherine and Jimmy Foote.

'Well, old man,' said the latter when the screw had begun to revolve once more, 'what now? What is the next thing?'

'The next thing,' Browne replied, seating himself beside Katherine as he spoke, and taking her hand, 'is Yokohama, and a wedding, at which you shall assist in the capacity of best man.'

That night the lovers stood on deck, leaning against the bulwarks watching the moon rise from behind a bank of cloud.

'Of what are you thinking, sweetheart?' Browne inquired, looking at the sweet face beside him. 'I wonder if I could guess.'

'I very much doubt it,' she answered, with a sad little smile. 'You had better try.'

'You were thinking of a tiny landlocked harbour, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, were you not?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'I certainly was. I was thinking of our first meeting in Merok. Oh Jack! Jack! how much has happened since then!'

'Yes,' he answered slowly. 'A great deal has happened; but at least there are two things for which we should be thankful.'

'And what are they?'

'The first is that we are together, and the second is that you are not THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER!'

THE END.

HAREM HOSPITALITY.



TRAVELLERS, even the leisurely and the enterprising, find themselves limited to the tourist tracks in the lands they visit. They may pay their way and welcome among bazaars, shops, and show-places; but the true inwardness of home-life is sacred everywhere from foreign curiosity, however well filled its open purse. One is more hopelessly aware of this fact in Eastern than in Western countries. It is quite possible to visit in Italy and France, and enjoy watching the many ways various families find of doing the same things; and the worst bar between us and our entertainers, in addition to individual peculiarities, is the difference in our race, religion, and language. But in the East the differences are beyond counting; for the world presents an angle to harem eyes so unfamiliar to us that there are indeed few things we can appreciate in common.

Off one of Cairo's most crowded thoroughfares, surrounded by high walls, stands the harem of a certain Turkish nobleman, Pasha S—, who was uncommonly well known in Egypt; not so much because he was bad—for there is nothing startlingly uncommon in that—but because he openly defied the laws, thereby drawing on himself the wrath of the English authorities, and consequent exposure of his doings in the leading British papers. On one occasion Pasha S— and some other Eastern potentates were arrested on the charge of buying slaves up the Nile and bringing them to Cairo. The case, however, could not be proved against him, and he was released; he testified gratitude for this by inviting to his harem two women-members of a Scottish family resident in Cairo, of which the present writer is one.

On the day appointed for our reception the outer gates were swung back by a tall Nubian,

who led us down a stone walk flanked by high walls, through an archway into a square court. Here he was supported by the presence of at least a dozen other men of equal blackness and solemnity, who escorted us in state to the door of the harem itself, where we found the Pasha's wife *par excellence* waiting to receive us. She was an immensely stout woman, enveloped in a dressing-gown of figured cotton; and, although the conversation that we had together was highly condensed owing to a total ignorance of each other's language, her demonstrations of welcome were exceedingly gracious. She led us, with kindly signs and a flat-footed waddle, through a suite of large, empty rooms, whose floors were waxed to such a degree that any pursuit but that of skating would have been a difficulty. We reached the supper-chamber, however, without accident, and found divans to sit on, arranged conveniently near two or three small Arab tables, set out with coffee, native scones, bowls of buffalo-milk, and the butter that had been made from it, as strong in taste as it was dark in colour. These delicacies were handed to us by our two harem friends, the Pasha's daughter and Feerooza, his niece. The latter we knew well, having spent many a hot afternoon in the cool of her airy bedroom, watching her twist brown cigarettes with her browner fingers. It will be a disappointment to the lovers of the beautiful to hear that she was only redeemed from plainness by a magnificent pair of dark eyes. She was distinctly too fat for our ideas of grace; and although not browner in face than a Spaniard, yet her colour was mottled and muddy. When we had drunk as much buffalo-milk as politeness obliged, our hostess went to the opening in the room where the door ought to have been, and clapped her hands. In answer to this summons, a black servant appeared and led us through rooms, empty of all but the gathering shadows, to the door of our sleeping-quarters, which he politely opened for our entrance, and then, as he respectfully withdrew, turned the key securely on us for the night.

The room was large and lofty, and contained no furniture of any description whatever except a bed. This familiar object did not blushing hug the wall as one expects a bed to do, but stood defiantly in the very centre of the room. Its magnificence suggested the thought that generations and generations of Pashas must have been born on and have died in it. It was four-posted, with gold gauze mosquito curtains, and destitute of sheets and blankets, but provided with two curious thick coverlets rolled together and stretched across the foot, with the object doubtless of symmetrically balancing the one long pillow in a cotton bag, hard as the floor and humpy as a camel, which occupied the other end. This bed emitted and radiated around it scents of all the spices of Arabia, and the still, hot air was noticeably thick to the eye with the fumes of some penetrating

incense that the guardians of the bed had been burning round it to do us honour. In defiance of those unaccustomed luxuries, we slept until shortly after six next morning, when the door was unlocked to admit black servants bearing water-jugs and cups of thick native coffee, to refresh us within and without.

On leaving the room we were joined in the court by the ladies of the harem, who were all clustered round the well with their dusky, dark-eyed babies. The Pasha's daughters-in-law, with their children, all inhabited this building; and it was such an immense place that nobody seemed exactly to know how many people were under the same roof. As soon as the sun's rays reached the courtyard, a procession of two or three dozen women started for the bath-house. In this place at first sight there appeared to be neither baths nor water. It was simply a marble room with taps fixed in the walls, whence the water fell on the floor and was led off by small gutters through a grating. Ranged round the sides were projecting basins like marble mangers, where a child might be placed out of the wet or given a bath. In the centre of the room a fountain was playing for people to sit under. It was not long before the taps were on and the clothes off, for instantly congested masses of women surrounded each waterspout. Until now we had absolutely believed that the women's leisure hours comprised every moment of the year; but we were mistaken, for here they are all busy washing either themselves, each other, or their clothes.

From this entertainment of jubilant femininity we were summoned to a twelve-o'clock English breakfast, where we sat upon chairs, the first we had seen since our arrival. After this meal everybody retired to rest, and we followed Feerooza to the largest of the two rooms belonging exclusively to her. This apartment, instead of presenting the crowded appearance of an English girl's boudoir, had nothing in it but a heap of cushions and a table hardly large enough to hold the candle (bent double with the heat), and a packet of tobacco. The room was hot and dark; Feerooza was proceeding to make a cigarette, when something banged against the closed shutters, and a large locust burst through a hole in the woodwork and fell with a thud on the polished floor. She carefully pulled her clothes well out of the way of contact with the wounded insect, and began leisurely to fan her ankles with a dried palm-leaf. These afternoon siestas were very pleasant, as we lay on comfortable cushions, wearing little but talking much. The discussions ranged round our different religions and customs, and over books we had or had not liked. Our girl-friend was a very devout Mohammedan, reverent in her prayers, and was spreading out a carpet, with her face bowed towards Mecca, when a cry from the neighbouring minaret reminded her that 'there is no God but one

God, and prayer is better than sleep.' She spoke of the howling Dervishes with great scorn, as merely mad fanatics, looked upon by any educated Mohammedan as beneath contempt. She also told how much more religious the men of her country were than the women, almost all of them abstaining from food, water, or amusements between sunrise and sunset during the Ramadan month; while they rarely drink wine, and constantly attend readings and other religious ceremonials in the mosques. She was so firmly persuaded that we Christians were polytheists that nothing could shake this idea; it had arisen from something she had read in a French book regarding the mystery of the Trinity. Her curiosity concerning our religion was quite inextinguishable, although she displayed an almost equal interest in hearing how our English engineers sat up night after night with the Nile, watching by its bed with an attentive finger on its fluctuating pulse; or how English girls rode races to the Pyramids and picnicked with the Sphinx. Strangely enough there were many customs that we had seen and she had only heard of—such as an ordinary Moulid; the cutting of the Khaleej, when the figure of a girl—in olden days no effigy—is thrown into the water, to propitiate the angry Nile; or the passing of the Holy Carpet on its way to cover the Caaba at Mecca.

It was impossible for us, even with Feerooza's help, to arrive at an understanding of the exact position of the servants in the harem. Of the fifty or sixty women who were there, certainly most were either slaves or guests, for they received no payment beyond their food and lodging for doing for the most part nothing at all; while, on the other hand, some of them received handsome salaries. If any of them were ill-treated and wished to leave the harem, they could seek the protection of the British Government in the Cairo Slaves' Home, where they might remain until provided with a husband or a situation.

The conversation on those hot afternoons more often wandered to Feerooza's early years than to her present life. Of course a description of her presents no type of an ordinary harem-lady; for they are mere children in mind and manners, while Feerooza was exceptionally clever. Her father was born in Constantinople, and educated in Paris, where he learnt not only French and English, but absorbed with an appreciative mind many European ideas. Some years later, when his daughter was born, he arranged that German and English governesses should have complete charge of her, and Feerooza was twelve years old before the calamity of his death put an end at once to her education and freedom. From that day, ten years ago, until now she has been under her uncle's care, not only shut up in his harem, but engaged to be married to one of his sons, an honour which she has successfully managed to put

off more than once. Here, in addition to the occasional donkey-ride, there is only one outing allowed to relieve the monotony in the lives of the harem ladies. This treat is a picnic to a small island on the Nile belonging to the Pasha. Feerooza and her cousin, or one of us, veiled, and protected within a shut carriage by two female servants, guarded without by two male ones, might drive to the river and cross the water to this palmy grove. Here the excitement and delight consisted in the fact that they might walk without anything on their faces, lie on the grass if they could find any, or sit up to the knees in the Nile, enjoying all manner of delicious fruits, while watching man, the only forbidden one, sailing silently past them. On these occasions, instead of the ordinary dressing-gown of coloured cotton, they wore their state-garments of black silk, with black scarfs worn round the head. The servants changed their blue working-gowns for others made of camel-hair. We never heard Feerooza express any bitterness about her position during those rare holidays, nor, indeed, at any other time. She was so indolent that to hurry, even in the pursuit of pleasure, would have been impossible, although she was ready enough to enjoy any little change such as our society brought her, if there was no exertion required on her part.

Even more important, if possible, inside than outside the harem, was the dinner-hour; and the arrival of it put an end to our afternoon talk, for a servant had appeared to summon us to the table of our host. The party assembled in an outside room beyond the courtyard, and consisted of my cousin, with her husband, myself, and Pasha S—, who deferentially invited us to seat ourselves on the cushions surrounding the low dinner-table. The first course, a large bowl of white soup, stood in the centre of it, and we all ate from this common tureen with the wooden ladles provided. Fourteen courses followed on this solid foundation; one of them was a small sheep boiled whole. We were given no knives or forks; but each one pulled with the fingers the bit he or she liked best, and laid it on the flat scone which supplied the place of a plate. Whenever our host saw a piece of meat that he thought was particularly appetising, he pulled it off the sheep, and thrust it into the mouth of the guest unfortunate enough to be next him. The immediate neighbourhood of this man, whose face was the colour and consistency of perspiring putty, extinguished all desire to eat. Yet, for duty's sake, we went bravely through the goat-steaks, the iced vegetables, the rich sweets and pastries, and the elaborately constructed jellies. Our host told us with pride that he gave his cook ninety pounds a year; but we have no particular reason to suppose that he was speaking the truth. Two of the Pasha's sons waited on us during dinner, which was tediously long; and their last office, after handing coffee, was to place before each of us, in turn, a golden

basin with water to wash in. This meal and the Pasha's after-dinner smoke lasted so long that it was late before we separated. We were thankful to retire to the golden bed and sleep off the exhaustion that must ever follow the strain of combined overcivility and overeating.

On the afternoon of the next day we were invited, by good fortune, to the common women's quarters, to join the feast and add our voice to the rejoicings that welcomed the birth of a dragoman's son. Proceeding to this scene of festivity, we found a large crowd of women in blue-striped gowns and brightly-coloured shoes, waiting about aimlessly, gossiping. The arrival, however, of some dancing-girls immediately sent the whole bevy upstairs in hot haste to secure good places in the room used on such birthday occasions. The floor was instantly covered with kneeling and squatting women, leaving, one would have thought, hardly space in the centre for any dancing at all. This performance, however, occupied more time than space, for the dancers rarely took even a step backwards or forwards, confining their movements entirely to the body, which they jerked about as if it had no connection with the legs at all. After any peculiarly disgusting convulsion the applause rose high, and was shown by the curious whirring, throaty noise that is here the outward expression of pleasure. The happy announcement that food was ready mercifully put an end to the dancing, or we might have been sitting there yet; and the whole company flocked into the feast-room, where meats of all kinds were arranged down a low table. Here the women fell tooth and nail on the food, pulling off a bit of flesh here or fat there, till considerably more eating might have been had off the fronts of their dresses than from the disarranged dishes. Much-needed basins to wash in, coffee, and cigarettes followed each other fast, and the general opinion conveyed to those who could understand it was that the *fantasia* had been eminently successful.

It was with considerable relief that we left the heated atmosphere of the eating-room, to examine the quaint wicker beds that the native women

use. Nobody seems to care about sleeping in one place, and the beds are to be found anywhere and everywhere, from the court to the roof of the house. From these domestic scenes we passed out into the garden, which was delicious in the luxuriance of its undergrowth and tropical variety of flowers. We rested on timeworn marble seats, warm, as if possessed of some inward heat. White butterflies, like flickering flecks of sunlight, palpitated past us; bees with heavy force flew from flower to flower. Before us was an old fountain; it represented a cherub, whose marble cheeks were worn away by the countless living lips that have pressed his to receive the water that flows from them no longer. We were possessed by a drowsy lotus-eater feeling. Like a pulse throbbing within us, and a visible force enveloping us, the never-ceasing hum of life saturated the breathless air. Waves of heat arose tauntingly from the ground around the parched water-sprite; they quivered above his head like living things, and drove us, drowsy with their fumes, to seek the shelter of the cool harem. As we passed along the garden path the roar of traffic reached us from the street, where trees, choking for breath, threw a dusty shade on the thirsty throng. We had left for a day the rush of advancement, and were standing within shut walls which have enclosed, without a change, generation after generation of women for hundreds of years. It transports us to any age, for time has stood still here, while women's lives have flowed through it. Outside the walls voices echo to them from thousands of unseen speakers, and all day long the tread from ceaseless feet, following each other fast, rises to their ears from invisible travellers. Everything is unreal to them, except the harem wall, casting its deathly shadow on their lives, shutting them out of a world that would furnish them at least with some variety, if it was only a variety in their pain. It needs, indeed, the halo of romance that surrounds all ancient customs to conceal the horrible deformity of an institution that places under lock and key the best thing in the world—the influence of good women.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER V.—THE TAPU OF BANDERAH.



MR and Mrs Deighton were at lunch, talking about the genial manners and other qualifications of their guests, when suddenly they heard a rapid step on the veranda, and Blount, the trader, dashed into the room.

His face was white with excitement, and they saw that he carried his revolver in his hand.

'What, in Heaven's name, is wrong, Mr Blount? Why are you armed?'

'For God's sake, don't ask me now! Our lives are in danger—deadly, imminent danger. Follow me to my house.'

'But, my dear sir,' began Mr Deighton, 'I do not see—I fail'—

'Man, are you mad? Do you think I do not

know what I am saying? Your two friends are both murdered. Banderah is now at my house, too exhausted to tell me more than to come and save you.'

'Dear, dear me! Oh, this is dreadful! Let us, Alice, my dear, seek'—

'Not now,' and the trader seized the missionary by the arm as he was about to sink upon his knees. 'Stay here and pray if you like—and get your throat cut. In ten—in five minutes more every native in the place except Banderah will be here, ready to burn and murder. I tell you, man, that our only chance of safety is to reach my house first, and then the schooner. Come, Mrs Deighton. For Heaven's sake, come!'

Pushing past the missionary, he seized Mrs Deighton by the hand and descended the steps. They had scarcely gone two hundred yards when they heard a strange, awful cry peal through the woods, and Mr Deighton shuddered. Only once before had he heard such a cry, and that was when, during the early days of the mission, he had seen a native priest tear out the heart of a victim destined for a cannibal feast, and hold it up to the people.

Suddenly Mrs Deighton gasped and tottered as they hurried her along; she was already exhausted. Then Deighton stopped.

'Mr Blount—go on by yourself. We have not your strength to run at this speed. I will help my wife along in a minute or two. Some of the mission people will surely come to our aid.'

'Will they?' said Blount grimly. 'Look for yourself and see; there's not a soul in the whole village. They have gone to see'—and he made an expressive gesture.

Mr Deighton groaned. 'Oh! this is terrible.' Then suddenly, as he saw his wife's deathly features, his real nature came out. 'Mr Blount, you are a brave man. I beseech you, save my dear wife. I am too exhausted to run any farther. I am too weak from my last attack of fever. But we are only a quarter of a mile away from your house now. Take her on with you, but give me your pistol. I can, at least, cover your retreat for a time.'

Blount hesitated; then, giving his pistol to the missionary, he lifted the fainting woman in his arms, and said:

'Try and come on a little. As soon as I am in sight of the house your wife will be safe. You must, at least, keep me in sight.'

As the trader strode along, carrying the unconscious woman in his strong arms, the missionary looked at the weapon in his hand and shuddered again.

'May God forgive me if I have done wrong,' he muttered. 'Take the life of one of His creatures to save my own I never will. Yet to save hers I must do it.'

Then, with trembling feet but brave heart, he

walked unsteadily along after the trader and his burden. So far no sound had reached him since that one dreadful cry smote upon his ear, and a hope began to rise in his breast that no immediate danger threatened. A short distance away, embowered among the trees, was the house of Burrowes. The door was closed, and not a sign of life was discernible about the place.

Heavens! were they asleep? He had heard that Burrowes and the German had been carousing all the morning with the captain of the *Island Maid*. Likely enough they were all lying in a drunken slumber. 'Lord give me strength to warn them,' he said to himself; and then, with a last glance at Blount and his wife, he resolutely turned aside, and began to ascend the hill.

But before he gained the summit Blount reached the fence surrounding his house, and Banderah and Taya and her two young brothers, rifles in hand, met the trader.

'Quick! take her;' and he pushed Mrs Deighton into Taya's arms and looked back.

'He's going up to Burrowes's house! Come, Banderah'—and he started back again—'he'll be speared or shot before he gets there.'

Just as the missionary reached the door and began in feeble, exhausted tones to call out, Blount and the chief caught up to him, and seizing his hands, dragged him away again down the hill.

'Don't bother about them; they are all on board,' was all Blount said. And there was no time to talk, for now fierce cries were heard in the direction of the mission-house, and Blount and Banderah, looking back, saw black, naked figures leap over the low stone wall enclosing the missionary's dwelling, and disappear inside.

'Just in time,' muttered the trader, as, dragging the missionary between them, they gained the house and set him down beside his wife, who, with a cry of thankfulness, threw her arms about his neck, and then quietly fainted.

For nearly half-an-hour Blount, with Banderah and the missionary by his side, looked out through the windows, and saw the natives plundering and wrecking the mission-house and the dwellings of Schwartzkoff and Burrowes. A mile away, motionless upon the glassy waters of the harbour, lay the schooner, with her boat astern, and every now and then Blount would take a look at her through his glass.

'I can't see a soul on deck,' he said to Mr Deighton. 'I heard that Peter and Burrowes went off this morning with the captain, all pretty drunk. I wish I knew what is best to do. To go on board would perhaps mean that those ruffians would shoot us down before we were alongside. No; we'll stay here and take our chance. Banderah says he feels pretty sure

that he can protect us from his own people. 'They'd never dare to hurt him; and I think that will steady them a bit;' and he pointed to the fence, upon which, at intervals, were tied green coco-nut boughs. These had just been placed there by Banderah himself, and meant that the house was *tapu*—it and all in it were sacred.

'God grant it may,' said Mr Deighton; and looking at the mystic sign, the use of which he had so often tried to put down as a silly, heathenish practice, he felt a twinge of conscience.

At last the work of plunder was over, and Blount and those with him, grasping their rifles tightly in their hands, saw a swarm of black, excited savages, led by two 'devil-doctors,' or priests, advance towards the house. At the same moment Banderah, looking seaward, saw that the boat had left the schooner and was pulling ashore. He was just about to point her out to the trader, when, for some reason, he changed his mind, turned away, and joined his white friends at the other end of the room.

Following the lead of the devil-doctors, who, stripped to the waist, and with their heads covered with the hideous masks used in their incantations, looked like demons newly risen from the pit, the yelling swarm of natives at last reached the fence outside Blount's house; and Mr Deighton, with an inward groan, saw among them some of his pet converts, stark-naked, and armed with spears and clubs.

Leaping and dancing with mad gyrations, and uttering curious grunting sounds as their feet struck the ground, the devil-doctors at last came within a few feet of the gate in the trader's fence. Then, suddenly, as they caught sight of a branch of coco-nut twisted in and around the woodwork of the gate, they stopped their maddened whirl as if by magic; and upon those behind them fell the silence of fear.

'Thank God,' muttered Blount, 'we are safe. They will not break Banderah's *tapu*.'

Then, rifle in hand, and with quiet, unmoved face, Banderah opened the trader's door and came out before them.

'Who among ye desires the life of Banderah and those to whom he has given his *tapu*?' he said.

The smaller of the two priests dashed aside his mask, and revealed the face of the old man Toka, who had struck Baxter his death-blow.

'Who, indeed, oh chief? If it be to thy mind to make *tapu* this house and all in it, who is there dare break it? To the white man Challi and his sons and daughters we meant no harm—though sweet to our bellies will be the flesh of those whom we have slain, and who now roast for the feast. But more are yet to come; for I, Toka, lost my son when thou, Banderah, lost thy sister, and the gods

have told me that I shall eat my fill of those who stole him.'

The savage, bitter hatred that rang through the old man's voice, and the deep, approving murmur of those who stood about him, warned both Banderah and Blount that the lust for slaughter was not yet appeased; so it was with a feeling of intense surprise and relief that the trader and the missionary saw them suddenly withdraw and move rapidly away to the rear of the house among the thick jungle.

'That's very curious,' said Blount, turning to Banderah, and speaking in English; and then the chief took him by the arm and pointed towards the shore. The boat pulled by Schwartzkoff and Burrowes, with Captain Bilker sitting in the stern, had just touched the beach. Then it flashed across his mind in an instant why the natives had left so suddenly: they were lying in ambush for the three men.

'By heavens! bad as they are, I can't let them walk to their death,' said Blount, jumping outside, so as to hail and warn them. But before he could utter a sound Banderah sprang upon him and clapped his hand to his mouth.

'Challi,' he said, 'they must die. Try to save them and we all perish. For the sake of thy daughters and of thy sons, raise not thy voice nor thy hand. Must all our blood run because of these three dogs' lives?'

Even as he spoke the end came. Staggering up the beach in drunken hilarity, the three whites did not notice, as they headed for the path, a file of natives, armed with spears and clubs, walk quietly along between them and the water's edge. There they sat and waited. But not for long; for presently, from out the thick tangled jungle in front came a humming whirl of deadly arrows, and in a few seconds the three white men were wallowing in their blood. Then came that blood-curdling shout of savage triumph, telling those who heard it all was over. Before its echoes died away the bleeding bodies were carried to where a thick, heavy smoke rising from the jungle told the shuddering missionary that the awful feast was preparing. When he looked again not a native was in sight.

Standing apart from the others in the room, Blount and Banderah spoke hurriedly together, and then the trader came to the missionary.

'Mr Deighton, if you wish to save your wife's and your own life, and escape from this slaughter-house, now is your time. I believe we shall never be safe again, and I would gladly go with you now if I could. But my daughter Nellie is at Lak-a-lak, and—well, that settles it. Banderah here will tell you that he dreads for you to stay, as the priests may plot your death at any moment. I implore you, sir, to think of your wife. See! there is the boat, drifting along the beach with the tide. By all that is dear to you, I entreat you to be advised and get on board

the schooner, and whatever port you do reach, send a vessel to take me away.'

Then, almost before the missionary and his wife could realise what was happening, Banderah had run to the beach, swum to the boat, seized the painter, gained the shore again, and pulled her along till opposite the trader's house, just as Blount and Taya, supporting Mrs Deighton between them, were leaving the house to meet him.

In twenty minutes more they were close to the *Island Maid*, and saw that her crew were weighing the anchor. On the after-deck stood the mate and steward, with rifles in their hands.

'What on earth is wrong?' said the mate as the boat bumped up alongside, and the missionary and his trembling wife were assisted on deck.

'Don't ask now, man. Get your anchor up as quick as you can, and put to sea. Your captain and the two passengers are all dead. Clear out at once if you don't want the ship to be taken.'

'I thought something was wrong when I saw the native dragging the boat along. Lend us a hand to get under way, will you?' and the mate sprang forward.

In another five minutes the *Island Maid's* anchor was up, and then Blount and Banderah, with a hurried farewell to Mr and Mrs Deighton, sprang into the boat and pushed off.

'May God bless and keep you,' called out the missionary to Blount, 'and may we meet again soon;' and then, sinking on his knees beside his wife, he raised his face to heaven, and the trader saw that tears were streaming down his worn and rugged cheeks.

But Blount never more saw nor heard of the missionary and his wife. Long, long afterwards he did hear that some wreckage of a vessel like the *Island Maid* had been found on Rennel Island, and that sovereigns were discovered among the pools and crevices of the reef for many years subsequently. Whether she ran ashore or drifted there dismayed—for a heavy gale set in a week after she left Mayou—is one of those mysteries of the sea that will never be solved.

Soon after the great feast Toka made a request for another victim to be furnished for the ovens. Banderah's practical nature showed itself in his reply. 'Yes,' said he, 'and thou shalt be the man;' and taking a spear, he passed it through the old priest's body.

Two years passed before another ship touched at Mayou, and Blount, now perfectly assured of his own safety, felt no desire to leave the island, for matters went along smoothly enough after this; and the trader prospered and grew rich under Banderah's protecting care.

THE 'ERMAK,' A NEW RUSSIAN ICE-BREAKER.



THE Russians, with their ports ice-bound and useless for some three or four months in the year, have always felt themselves cruelly handicapped in the commercial race for wealth, which seems to bid fair within the next half-century to take the place of the old-fashioned steel and gunpowder warfare among the nations of the future. Their attempts to secure open ports in the south were thwarted by the restraining clauses of various treaties, which hamper their movements, however little regard they may pretend to pay to them; and now that they have seized ice-free ports in China, and have an eye to a like chance on the Persian Gulf, they are more than ever concerned in all possible means of keeping open the existing home ports. In default of the Gulf Stream being obligingly induced to alter its course by the cutting of the Panama Canal (about which a good deal was said at one time), and so change the winter conditions of certain Russian ports on the Baltic, other less uncertain means towards the desired end have been taken. The ice-breaker, on any important scale, first presented itself to the Russians in the course of the construction of the great Siberian railway, when it became a

question of crossing the Lake Baikal, a distance of forty or fifty miles, by a ferry, or of building a line round its southern end, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles in length. The former route was first chosen, and a huge ferry to take three loaded trains at once was ordered, together with a combined tug and ice-breaker, to ensure a free passage all the year. The enormous cost of this scheme—a special floating-dock had to be built to facilitate the construction of the ferry and tug—and several other considerations, led to the practical abandonment of the ferry for the longer but more certain course of a railway round the southern end of the lake. The next attempt at ice-breaking on a considerable scale was made at Vladivostok, and with success. The port is now kept open the year round, and, together with the railway from it to Khabarovsk (the Ussuri Railway), on the Amur River, has completely revolutionised the conditions of life in the Russian Far East. Whereas in the old days the country was supplied with all the necessaries of life—with the exception of meat and certain low grades of flour which came from the Chinese in Manchuria, only once a year from America and European Russia—it is now provided for by regular monthly sailings of the Russian Volunteer

Fleet steamers, as well as services, mostly under the German flag, from Chinese and Japanese ports.

The immense importance of an open port never, of course, required any demonstration; and once the practicability of the ice-breaker had been put to the test at Vladivostok, it was determined to attempt the same means at the more difficult port of St Petersburg. Admiral Makarof, a very distinguished oceanographer, whose pet scheme it was to construct an ice-breaker of such power that not only would it keep open the port during the winter, but also to some extent serve in the solution of Arctic problems, secured funds from the Russian Government, and the order for the new vessel was placed with the Armstrong-Whitworth Company on Christmas Eve, 1897. The *Ermak*, built of mild steel and on the admiral's plans, was launched on the Tyne on 17th October of last year, and in March 1899 arrived at Kronstadt, breaking its way with ease and certainty through the winter ice of the Neva.

The ice-breaker, it is not generally known, works not by direct impact, but by its enormous weight, artificially increased where required by filling numerous water-tight compartments distributed all over the ship. It will readily be understood, with a moment's reflection, that to ram or charge a field of ice and cut through it, as one so often hears these ice-breakers spoken of as doing, is an utter impossibility, even with ice no thicker than, say, a couple of feet. When that thickness is increased to double and treble, as is the case in the severe winters of Russia, the absurdity of the notion becomes still more evident. But the ice-breaker never attempts to cut through Arctic ice. It is constructed with a flat bottom; and when about to make an attack on a field of ice, water is pumped into the aft-compartments to bring the bow well above the surface. Then, retiring some distance from its mark, the ice-breaker charges full tilt at the ice, and lands, in consequence, partly on the top of it. The water in the aft-compartments is then pumped with all speed into those forward, so that, apart from the great weight of the steel ship, the enormous pressure of hundreds of tons of water is brought to bear upon the ice along a comparatively narrow line, starting from the edge of the field. If a crack as long as the ship itself does not ensue at the first attempt, it is pretty certain that at least the edge of the field will give, and by repeating the process a clear path is eventually made. The old pattern of ice-breaker in use at Vladivostok did no more than this, and after some hours' work generally found itself considerably hampered by frozen clouds of spray all over its bows, besides being under the necessity of passing to and fro unceasingly to keep the channel it had made open, since it did not dispose of the broken ice in its wake, and this, naturally, was not long in re-forming.

The *Ermak*, however, is a great improvement on

the old pattern, and is calculated to overcome all the old obstacles. In the first place, it is over three hundred feet long, and the value of length, when combined with strength, will be plain from the explanation given above of the *modus operandi*. It has four engines, each of two thousand five hundred horse-power, and four screws. Of the latter, three are placed in the usual manner at the stern, where also are three of the engines. The fourth engine and screw are placed forward. The vessel is seventy-one feet wide, and is divided into forty-eight water-tight compartments, capable of being filled and emptied with great rapidity by a large pump placed amidships, which is constructed to deliver two thousand three hundred gallons per minute.

The use of the novel introduction of a screw near the bows is to complete the opening up process by creating a strong rush of water, which will carry the blocks of ice broken up by the weight of the ship well astern, and allow of no re-forming while the ship is preparing for another charge at the field. There are many minor novelties. Among the least happy, perhaps, may be noted the introduction of the 'marine buffer,' an idea of Admiral Makarof's for avoiding the disastrous results of a collision at sea. He hopes to see it generally applied at some future time, either in the form now first invented for the *Ermak*, or some modification of it. The *Ermak's* buffer is a combination of tubes placed vertically, and supposed, in the event of a collision end-on, to yield sufficiently to avoid the penetration of the other ship's side, as would be the case with a sharp prow. It is probable that the Admiral's humane invention will not find very ready acceptance among shipbuilders or shipowners generally; but perhaps he may be able to give it a trial on the *Ermak*, and it would therefore be premature to anticipate the result. Among less utopian devices is one for utilising the heat of the waste water from the engines to warm the fore-part of the ship, which he hopes to do sufficiently to prevent the clogging of the bows, and consequent stoppage of way by freezing spray and the drift snow of the icefields. A hydrothermograph, placed beneath the ship, is intended to give warning of the changes of temperature, and can be made to ring an alarm at any desired degree, so as to indicate, for example, the approach of an iceberg or any other considerable quantity of ice.

The *Ermak*, named from the Cossack who in 1580 conquered part of Siberia for Russia, is capable of a speed of sixteen knots; but as that will only be required to charge and drive her well upon the icefields, her engines are so arranged that she can use all her three stern screws at a much less rate of speed, and with the least possible expenditure of fuel. Admiral Makarof exhibited a large model of the *Ermak*, and expounded the plan to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1899.

As arranged, the new ice-breaker was employed during this last winter in keeping the port of St Petersburg open. In summer the *Erma*k will pass through the Kara Sea to the mouth of the Obi and Yenisei. In autumn she will be on the way to England with a cargo of timber from the

mouth of the river Yenisei, and will return to St Petersburg, bringing a full load of good English coal for the Russian fleet, in time for the resumption of her peculiar duties during the winter. If the Kara trip succeeds she may ultimately bring her powers to bear on the ice that defends the pole.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE NEW PLANET.



N a certain August night last year Herr G. Witt, of the Observatory of Urania, in Berlin, took a photograph of a particular portion of the heavens, giving that picture a very long exposure, so that the minutest stars might find a record there. When the plate was developed it was found that in one part of it, amid the hundreds of dots which were star images, was traced a little streak, that streak indicating a body which was in movement. This body turned out to be an asteroid, one of those little planets which during the present century have been discovered to the number of four hundred and thirty-two, not counting this new one, which has been named Eros. The new asteroid turns out to be by far the most important of all its kindred, not because of its size, for it is only a very small body, but because at one part of its journey round the sun it will approach this earth nearer than will any other of the heavenly bodies—our moon alone excepted. The importance of such a near neighbour in space means that by its aid the actual distance of the sun and other bodies can be far more accurately measured than was possible before its discovery. It will also materially help in the more accurate determination of the movements of comets. Indeed, the discovery of our little neighbour Eros is one of the most important astronomical events of the century.

FOG-SIGNALS AT SEA.

Some interesting experiments have recently been made by the Rev. Mr Bacon, of Newbury, Berks, by means of a balloon, in order to detect, if possible, the presence of invisible banks of vapour in the upper atmosphere. Some years ago, when Professor Tyndall was making acoustical experiments at sea, off the South Foreland, the firing of detonating cartridges was followed by an echo not only from the land, but from space; and Tyndall ascribed this last echo to the presence of what he called acoustic clouds. From his balloon Mr Bacon has failed to obtain the same effect, although he uses a four-ounce cartridge of tonite, which gives a report like a cannon. The cartridge hangs by a line one hundred feet below the car of the balloon, and is exploded by electricity. Some

seconds after the explosion, the echo comes up from the earth like a tremendous roar; but no aerial echo has yet been detected. It is proposed to use these loud-speaking cartridges during foggy weather at dangerous rocky points at sea, and they have actually been tried with great success. They can be heard for twenty to thirty miles; and it seems certain that if such a means of warning had been available at the Casquets, and employed at the proper moment, the recent wreck of the *Stella* might have been obviated.

WASTE PRODUCTS.

From a very interesting report recently issued by Lord Kelvin and Professor Barr, it would seem that the term 'waste products' will in the near future cease to be employed; for the simple reason that there will be no waste. These two gentlemen have for some time been making investigations at Edinburgh, Bradford, and Oldham with regard to the destruction of town refuse, and the conclusions at which they have arrived are of great interest to local authorities, as well as to the general public. By means of modern methods of destruction, the most unpromising refuse—most of it of a noxious and putrescent nature—can be absolutely consumed without the creation of either nuisance or smoke. More than this, the products of combustion assume in many cases a distinct commercial value. In some cases, too, as our readers are already aware, the heat engendered in the destruction is utilised for the production of electricity for both light and motive-power. When this important result was first obtained it was found necessary to use coke and coal to assist the rubbish to burn; but now, by improved methods, no fuel is needed. This transformation of noxious filth into the finest and most beautiful form of artificial light is one of the triumphs of the century.

THE RAILWAY REST.

Railway carriages, of all classes, are now made so comfortable and luxurious that there is little to find fault with; and the happy possessor of a corner seat feels little fatigue although he may have travelled two hundred miles or more. If he has not been lucky enough to secure one of the corners, he will be in equally comfortable circumstances if he carry with him 'the railway rest' invented and patented by Mr Stewart of

Twynholm, Scotland. It consists of a band of serge material, with an attachment at one end by which it can be fixed to the bracket supporting the luggage-rack. The traveller slopes the band according to his taste, and, sitting upon the end of it, makes for himself an elastic back-rest against which he can lounge in great comfort.

SIXTY-FIVE MILES AN HOUR.

Our best express trains occasionally exceed the great speed of one mile a minute; but such a rate of travelling would have been until recently considered quite impossible for any sort of vehicle on a common highway. M. Jenatzy, a Belgian engineer, has recently built and driven a form of auto-car in France at the wondrous speed of nearly sixty-six miles per hour. The vehicle has apparently been built for speed and nothing else. It has the shape of a Whitehead torpedo in order to reduce air-resistance to a minimum, it is made of sheet-iron, and is mounted on a frame having four pneumatic-tired wheels. The motive-power is electricity; but after a short spurt at the tremendous speed mentioned the batteries require re-charging. Photographs of the apparatus, stationary and in rapid motion, are reproduced in *The Auto-car journal*.

A REFLECTING FILM.

At the first conversazione of the Royal Society, held at Burlington House in May, many scientific novelties were shown; but none aroused more interest than the infinitely-thin silvered films exhibited by Mr A. Mallock. These films are obtained in a very novel manner, and consist practically of a material nearly akin to celluloid. A few drops of a solution of pyroxyline in amyl acetate are allowed to fall on the surface of water, when they spread out into a sheet a couple of inches in diameter, with a thickness of about the twenty-thousandth of an inch. The solvent evaporates, and the solid film can be lifted from the water on a ring of thin glass, and is afterwards gently washed in distilled water and silvered. Mirrors are constantly in request for various scientific instruments, and are very expensive when of glass; for the surface of the material has first to be optically worked—that is, made perfectly true—and the silver must be deposited on the surface so as to avoid the double reflection inseparable from ordinary looking-glass. It is said that the definition afforded by a reflected image from the film mirror is quite equal to that from carefully worked glass, while the cost is in comparison quite trivial.

POISONOUS PLANTS.

Distressing cases are not uncommon in which children, wandering in country places, have died through eating poisonous leaves, roots, or berries. The lower animals are commonly supposed to be

able to decide for themselves whether a plant is edible or not, and will refuse to touch anything harmful. But that this is not the case is well known to stock-keepers. The Royal Agricultural Society have recently been turning their attention to this important matter, and their consulting botanist has presented to them a report which abundantly illustrates the danger to grazing animals from poisonous plants growing on or near pasture-land. The pretty buttercup comes under the category of condemned plants, and is described as 'a worthless and dangerous weed.' It is more or less acrid in all its varieties, and cattle should not be allowed on pastures where it grows. Yews, laurels, and rhododendrons are very dangerous, the last two yielding a secretion which is rich in prussic acid. On the other hand, the cypress, which by common report is poisonous to cattle, does not seem to be harmful to them. It acts as an astringent; but no case is known in which any real injury has been caused to cattle from its presence.

NEW USES FOR GLASS.

The United States consul at Lyons has recently reported upon a new kind of pavement which has for some months been in use in Lyons, and has satisfactorily withstood the effects of heavy traffic. It is made of glass prepared in a peculiar manner, the product being known as ceramic stone. The factories where this material is prepared are of great extent, and we are told that in the yards were seen many tons of broken bottles, which the superintendent described as their 'raw material.' The treatment consists in heating the broken glass to the melting-point, and then compressing it by hydraulic pressure and forming it into moulds. For paving purposes the glass is made into bricks eight inches square, and is scored with cross lines, so that when the pavement is completed it resembles a huge chess-board. The glass loses its transparency and brittleness, and is said to be devitrified; it is as cheap as stone, and far more durable. It will resist crushing, frost, and heavy shocks; and can be employed for tubes, vats, tiles, chimneys, &c. It is available for all kinds of decorative purposes; and a large building made of the material will form an attractive object at the Paris Exhibition next year.

AGRICULTURAL REVIVAL IN ESSEX.

Six years ago the farmers in Essex were in a bad way. Thousands of acres were going out of cultivation, and landowners were glad to let their farms for a shilling per acre, if the tenant would pay tithe and taxes. Later on they offered their holdings free for a year or so to tenants who would undertake the trouble and expense of cultivation. A number of Scottish farmers came upon the scene, accepted the terms, and the experiment has succeeded. It is no longer profitable to grow wheat in Essex, and the new farmers at once

turned their attention to the dairy. They soon discovered that the industry would not pay them if the middleman were allowed, in the case of milk, to continue to absorb the lion's share of the profits. They therefore combined, formed a protection society, and determined to give the milk to the pigs rather than sell it below a certain price. Even under the revised conditions, the middleman secures about one hundred per cent. of the profits, and it thus comes about that a small milk-business employing only two carts will often produce an income of one thousand pounds per annum. There are few farmers nowadays who can hope for anything like such a return for their far more arduous and anxious labours.

TELEGRAPHY WITHOUT WIRES.

Owing chiefly to sensational newspaper reports with regard to the possibilities of wireless telegraphy, the public have been looking forward to the time when our streets shall no longer be excavated for the disposition of telegraph cables, and when our house-tops shall be free from a network of metallic spider-webs. Mr Preece's lecture before the Society of Arts will have dashed these pleasant hopes to the ground, for he has most emphatically shown that wireless telegraphy in its present form and limited speed cannot be named in the same category as the old system, and that it is only useful for special service under abnormal conditions. A curious instance of its efficacy is afforded by the collision in a fog of a steamer with the only lightship upon which Marconi's apparatus is as yet established. This lightship, which is twelve miles to the north-west of the South Foreland, was able to wire news of her predicament; and, had the need arisen, lifeboats would have been started from three or four ports to her assistance within a few minutes of the accident.

NEW LIFE-SAVING DEVICE.

There was recently a successful trial in St Katherine's Docks, London, of a method of rendering boats unsinkable—the invention of Mr E. S. Norris—a method which is as simple as it is effective. Supposing that he wishes to apply the invention to a lifeboat which is already fitted with water-tight compartments, he would fill those spaces with an indefinite number of closed tubes, each only a few inches long, made of some strong impervious material such as waterproof paper. But a boat with such compartments is not necessary, for the little cases can be held in a canvas band which can be nailed along the sides of any ordinary row-boat, and render it quite unsinkable. The principle can also be applied to life-belts and buoys—replacing the cork ordinarily used, with a great saving of expense. In the trials referred to, a specially-designed boat, with canvas-held tubes along her sides as well as fore and aft,

righted herself after being purposely capsized, although fitted with a mast and sail; while an ordinary boat similarly treated failed to sink, although the bung was removed to fill her with water, and seven men were aboard. These hopeful experiments were witnessed by representatives from the Admiralty and various shipping authorities.

FIRE EXTINCTION.

Lord Fortescue has in a recent letter to the *Times* advocated a system of water-supply which he has adopted in his own country house as a preventive against fire—a system originally suggested by Mr Osbert Chadwick, C.E. It is unfortunately only applicable when a constant supply of water under high-pressure is available. Upon every floor of the building to be protected there is provided a hose fitted with a nozzle; but this hose, instead of being the usual size, is only one inch in diameter. On the other hand, it is so light that a woman or child can easily control it, and a single valve will charge it with water at a moment's notice. The idea is to attack the flames before they get untamable, and before the arrival of a fire brigade. Every one knows that a gallon of water at this stage is more effectual than a hundred gallons later on. Another consideration is that the damage to decorations, furniture, and in factories to delicate machinery by the tremendous impact of a two or three inch stream of water—very often far more serious than that wrought by the flames—is almost altogether avoided by the use of the smaller hose. Protected in such a manner, and with a weekly 'fire-drill' for the inmates, any house or factory should be practically safe.

LENGTH OF LIFE.

According to M. I. Holl Schooling, of Brussels, there is a very easy way of calculating the age to which a human being may reasonably expect to live, but it is only applicable if his present age lies between twelve and eighty-six years. The method is really an old one, and was originally discovered by the mathematician Demoivre, who in 1865 emigrated from France to England, and became a member of the Royal Society. The rule is this: Subtract your present age from 86, divide the remainder by 2, and the result will give the number of years which you may expect to live. The rule may be approximately correct for some ages, and represents perhaps the nearest solution of an insoluble problem at which we can arrive.

ARTIFICIAL PEARLS.

The French scientific journal *La Nature* recently described some experiments by which the production of pearls was artificially induced in the shells of some molluscs kept in an aquarium.

No allusion is made to the circumstance that an extensive industry of this kind has been carried on for many years by the Chinese. The creature selected for the operation is a species of large fresh-water mussel, which is fished up from its *habitat* and returned to the water as soon as a little operation has been performed upon it. This consists in inserting between its body and the inner side of the shell a number of small round pellets of wax or clay, which in the course of a few months become coated with a layer of nacre, or mother-of-pearl. Sometimes small leaden images of some idol or divinity are made use of instead of the circular pellets, and these, when coated with the nacre, are sold as amulets or charms. All the gasteropods which secrete nacre will coat with it any foreign body which may by accident or design get within their shell, and hence it comes about that natural pearls have frequently a piece of driftwood or a particle of sand as a nucleus.

THE MANNA OF THE BIBLE.

The same journal has an interesting note by M. Henry Castrey on the manna picked up in the desert, which is supposed to be identical with that which plays such an important part in the history of the Jews as told in the Bible. It seems that in the present day Arabs who are obliged to traverse the sandy wastes of Arabia depend to a large extent upon this 'angel's food' both for themselves and for their camels. The manna is in reality a fungus which is found in great quantities on the sand after rain. Of a gray colour and of the size of a pea, it has a pleasant, sweet taste; and although its analysis shows that it is by no means a perfect food, it is sufficiently rich in nitrogenous matter and carbohydrates to sustain life for a long period.

FOG.

There is a prevailing notion that fog is something special to the Metropolis, and hence the term 'London particular' as applied to the 'pea-soupers' of November and December. But fog is not a thing by itself—an essential entity, so to speak—but simply the outcome of something else—smoke, to wit. So that wherever there is a large consumption of coal by our present barbarous process of open grates there is sure to be fog. Manchester and Glasgow afford abundant evidence of that. Professor Oliver Lodge, who has discovered an electrical invention which will turn Scotch mist into rain and smoke into 'something white,' says the only way to prevent a London fog is not to cause it; and the way not to cause it is not to burn coal-fires, like savages, in open grates. He believes that the day will come when it will be forbidden to import crude coal into London, and he would like to see the experiment tried of making gas at the great coalfields, and

conveying it to the towns in huge pipes and conduits. The experiment, of course, could not be made with respect to London, as it would have to be conducted on too large a scale; but it might be tried with a small town, and it will have to come to that some day. People say they cannot bear 'gas-stoves;' but, as a matter of fact, all fires are gas-stoves, and people make the gas themselves, and make it very badly. No doubt, however, the gas-stove of the future will be a very different contrivance from that of to-day. Professor Lodge is right, and knows what he is talking about. Meanwhile there is to be a very determined effort made to deal with the 'black smoke' nuisance in London, under the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1893. An influential society has been formed, of which Sir W. B. Richmond, the eminent artist, is the head, to wage war against the polluters of the London atmosphere, be they manufacturers, hotel-keepers, or householders. As the *Spectator* points out, there is no evil better worth fighting than that of black smoke, for it is black smoke which puts a curse on city life, and helps to degrade the population of the poorer quarters of London. If the black smoke could only be got rid of, London, with its noble tidal river and its splendid parks and gardens, might be one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and also one of the most habitable. As it is, it is hopelessly dark, dirty, and depressing. Perhaps when Londoners realise that fog is only arrested smoke, they will take to grates which consume their own smoke, or, better still, to coals which emit none.

'WHEN DAWN TAKES WING.'

WHEN Dawn takes wing, she eastward drives and 'lights
From love-dreams deep to wake the languid Sun;
The crimson portal with her pinions smites,
And cries, 'A day begun!'

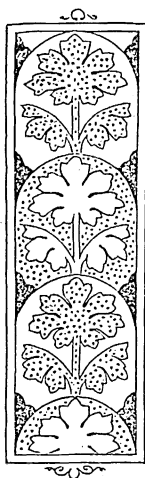
When Night takes wing, she flies toward the west,
Where flames with drowsy light the Day-god dear;
She piles cloud-curtains o'er his place of rest,
And whispers 'Night is here!'

When Hope takes wing, she toward true hearts aspires
With fancies to beguile the soul forlorn;
She weaves fond dreams of wistful, sweet desires,
Proclaiming 'Love is born!'

KATHLEEN HAYDN GREEN.

* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE LOST CAUSE.

A ROMANCE.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, Author of *The Rebel Commodore*, *An Unauthorised Intervention*, &c.

[NOTE.—That which follows is the narrative of certain passages in the earlier career of Mr George Holroyd—afterwards a member of Parliament and a holder of high office under George III., and latterly Lord Dunsyre in the peerage of Ireland—and is taken from a memoir in his own hand, now in the possession of the fifth Lord Dunsyre. The memoir, for weighty reasons that need not be set down here, has hitherto remained unpublished; but it has seemed right to the present peer that at least the events described in the ensuing extract, as throwing a new and valuable light on a byway of history and a great historical personage, should no longer be hidden from the world. It may be premised that at the date of these events—namely, towards the end of the second George's reign—Mr Holroyd was secretary to Lord Kynaston, one of the Ministers of State. On the January day on which the extract opens he was on his way from London to Bath to consult his chief, detained in the western city by an attack of the gout, on matters of most urgent import connected with his office. One servant rode with him. The narrative, it should be added, has been freely edited.]

CHAPTER I.—THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

THUS delayed, 'twas late afternoon ere we pulled up at 'The Bear' inn at Devizes for dinner. The early winter dusk was creeping in when we started again; there was a pleasant touch of frost in the air, giving promise of harder roads and a speedier progress than we had hitherto experienced; and I had good hope that, with luck and no mishaps, we should yet reach Bath in fair time that evening. You are to hear whether we did so or no.

For a time, after leaving the town behind, we pushed on at an easy canter. Now it was that I noticed a change in Joseph's bearing. 'Twas his first journey with me; he had but lately entered my lord's service, and I had chosen him to accompany me because of his knowledge of the road; and so far, much to my liking—for, to my mind, a surly and unsociable fellow is of all men the most hateful—he had proved most capable

and light-hearted. With the twilight, however, his mood was strangely different. His high spirits were gone, and he met my approaches to friendly conversation with ungracious monosyllables. Bethinking that he might bear me a grudge for dragging him from the warm fireside of the inn kitchen, I sought to rally him—impelled thereto, it may be, by the pint of good port that lay beneath my waistcoat.

'You're cursedly glum, Joseph!' I remarked. 'A-hankering after some fair chambermaid at "The Bear"?''

'Seen none, sir,' said he shortly.

'Well, what is it? Confess, man!'

He was silent.

'Come, heart up!' I cried. 'Not afraid of pads, are you?'

Again he said nothing; but the look on his face, and his quick, furtive glance ahead, told me that my random shot had hit the mark. I laughed outright.

'A pretty fellow like you—shame!' said I.

'Taint no joke, sir,' he replied, finding speech. 'For true, 'tis a bad stretch, this—none worse this side o' London town than 'twixt here and Bath. And they're terrible bold, sir—scarce a night but what they're out. Why, only last night'—

'Tales of "The Bear" kitchen?' I threw in. 'Well—last night?'

'I see'd him myself, sir—a cattle-dealer he was; and last night a pair of 'em took fifty pound from him, five miles out o' Bath. Then, no farther gone than Saturday'—

So he ran on with a string of stories, all telling of the recent exploits of the pads, mounted and on foot, who had made themselves unpleasantly familiar with many worthy people journeying to and from Bath. If a tithe of them were true we had some ground for apprehension. But were they true? Honestly, I did not believe it. At

the worst—well, I had seen something of these 'gentlemen of the road' at the Old Bailey and Tyburn, where they showed to small advantage; I had my sword and pistols, and some confidence in arm and eye; and at twenty-eight, I take it, a man should still have the appetite for an adventure. 'Twas plain, however, that Joseph thought otherwise. He started in his saddle when I gravely suggested that it might be our turn that evening.

'The Lord forbid, sir!' cried he most fervently.

'Even if we meet one alone?' said I. 'For myself, I hope we will—I should like a shot at a live pad. I warrant he'll run fast enough. And think how you could boast about it in London, Joseph!'

But he shook his head, unconvinced; and presently, as the dusk deepened, he busied himself with his own thoughts. By his countenance, they were somewhat doleful.

So we rode on for half-an-hour or more, along a road that was quickly hardening in the grip of the frost. Left to myself, my mind recurred to the papers in the satchel that was now strapped before me, and to the urgent necessity that they should reach my lord's hands without a moment's delay. He alone could decide the precise value of these communications from our agents abroad; but my knowledge of their gravity had been sufficient to draw me from the pleasures of town—which at that season, to an unmarried man not without prospects, meant something—and send me post-haste on the long and uncomfortable journey to Bath.

Scend was behind us when Joseph broke the silence. The night had now fallen, and although there was a moon, 'twas of small service to us; for here the road ran on in the shadow of a wood that bordered one side of it, and the darkness was such that we could scarce perceive each other, and already perforce had slackened our speed. And it was a terror of the dark, or his tone belied him, that had now given my companion the use of his tongue.

'This must be the place, sir,' said he in little more than a whisper—'just here, in this very wood—that the coach was stopped to-morrow week. Maybe'—and here his teeth came together with a snap.

'Yes?'

His voice sank still lower. 'Maybe they're waitin' to-night,' said he. 'They say 'tis a favourite spot o' theirs.'

For a moment I said nothing. The man was plainly in deadly fear, and, for myself, the reality of an encounter was somehow brought closer home to me here, with the black wood abreast and the darkness around. But the keen air and brisk exercise had served to raise my spirits, and I turned again to Joseph.

'Well, what odds? You can use a pistol, I dare say?'

'Y—yes, sir—a little. But I'm a miserable

poor hand in a fight—always was, sir!' said he, with something of a whimper; 'and they're terrible when they're countered!'

And, being a fellow of no spirit, he refused to be heartened; by which 'twas evident that I could put no dependence on him in the event of a meeting. It behoved me to lay my plans accordingly. For I had a fancy to discover for myself, if chance offered, if the highwaymen of the Bath road were truly so redoubtable. But how? All at once I had an idea. Turning it over, I began to convince myself that, if the worst befell, it was even the best course to ensure the success of my mission.

In a few words I explained it to Joseph, and at the same time entrusted to his care the satchel and its papers, giving him full directions for its disposal. 'You understand me?' I asked. 'You are a lighter weight than I, and it may easily be done.'

'Right, sir!' cried he briskly; and manifestly was overjoyed at the chance. He was thinking of his own skin, and had not a thought to spare for the consequences to me of the failure of my part. Nor, for that matter, had I.

'How far does this wood run?'

'We've half a mile of it yet, sir—or rather more, maybe.'

'And beyond?'

'Fairly open for a good bit.'

'Be ready, then—and, for Heaven's sake, keep your head. If you don't,' said I, 'I may be tempted to put a ball into you instead of the pad!'

All this, you will understand, was by way of precaution—or was it the prompting of some strange instinct within me? The danger might not arise; and indeed, as we jogged slowly onward, the chances that it would do so seemed sensibly to lessen. For, listen as I might, not a sound was there to warn us; none at all, in truth, save the clatter of our horses' hoofs and a gentle rustling in the tree-tops. So for perhaps five minutes longer, and then—

'Pull up, for your lives!'

The command came from the shadow of the wood, directly in front; it was at our very ears; the voice loud, harsh, peremptory. What immediately ensued was scarce of my own will. Somehow, my horse sprang forward—I must, in the surprise of the moment, have dug my spurs deep into his flanks—and simultaneously I heard an angry shout, and descried (not five yards from me) a couple of mounted forms looming indistinct by the roadside. Joseph's animal was not more than half a length behind mine, having wisely followed its example. And I was on the inside.

'Stop!'

We could not, even if we had wished. In a second we were upon them, and past. The shadowy figures took form and shape for an

instant as I dashed past their horses' noses, with not three feet to spare—safely and without interruption, for plainly our assailants were too much taken aback to attempt to cut us off. Their surprise did not endure. There was a sudden report, a ball whistled past my ear, and then an ominous clattering behind us. Suddenly I came to myself again; for these events had happened (so to speak) of themselves, and happened in less time than it takes to relate them. Now I found myself fumbling with the flap of my right-hand holster; Joseph was running neck-and-neck with me; and we were racing at highest speed towards the stretch of moonlit road that showed far in front, with the enemy thundering close at our heels.

'Faster, Mr Holroyd, faster!' said my servant.

I glanced behind. Less than fifty yards separated us from the nearest of the pursuers. Was the start enough? . . . And then, as we sped on, my first impulse was succeeded by one madder still. The reality of the position flashed upon me: that here was I, a man of some quality and repute, fleeing before a pair of common robbers without striking a single blow, my fate perhaps to be shot ingloriously in the back. A quick feeling of anger swept over me. We were nearing the open; Joseph was drawing gradually ahead; the sound of the chase dinned in my ears like the voice of a reproving conscience. I tightened rein.

'Now, Joseph,' I cried, 'on you go. Don't pull up till you're safe; never mind the beast.'

He nodded, nothing loath; for fear was upon him, and he was incapable of aught else. For me, my resolution was taken: come good or ill, I would try a fall with these gentlemen of the road.

Ere I had managed to rein in my horse—no easy task—we had passed the end of the wood, and emerged into a light (were it only that of the half-moon) which seemed most adequate by comparison with the darkness behind. I gripped my pistol harder. Joseph was already several lengths ahead, spurring for dear life: the moment had arrived for me to face the danger. And then, as I strove to pull the animal round, I heard this cry:

'After him, Tom—tally-ho! Leave the other to me.'

When at last I got the stubborn beast round, it was just in time to see a dark form dash past me and onward in the wake of my servant, now seventy yards away. I should have fired—as it befell, it would have mattered little; but I had neither the wit to do so at the proper instant, nor (as it proved) the opportunity to watch the upshot. For now I had my own concerns to mind. I took in the position with one glance. The second highwayman had pulled up his horse—'twas a big, deep-chested bay, with a patch of white on its forehead—at a distance of some ten yards, and now sat the panting animal immov-

able, toying idly with a great pistol; himself a tall, stoutly-made fellow, heavily cloaked, with a black beard showing beneath his crape mask. My pulses went a little faster. We were man to man; surely here was my opportunity. But for a minute I did nothing. I had a strange reluctance to take the first step. I could only watch my opponent, who confronted me in grim and uncomfortable silence, and wonder at his inaction—and my own. And the sound of the chase came fainter and fainter to our ears.

It was the highwayman who spoke at last.

'Give you good-evening, sir,' said he in smooth and cultured tones, albeit with a shade of mockery in them. 'Pray let me thank you for your courtesy in stopping. My friend will probably settle with yours. For yourself, I need not detain you long.'

'You are very kind,' I returned, instinctively adopting his tone. 'You want my valuables, I suppose?'

He pulled off his hat with a flourish. 'To put it bluntly,' said he. 'I will only beg of you to be quick. I have yet to overtake my friend—and yours—and time is precious.'

The fellow had the grand manner, and spoke as if he were conferring a favour. I should have been angry at his impudence. Instead, I had an inclination to laugh. After all, if one is to be robbed, surely it is preferable to be robbed with some degree of politeness.

'Your valuables, papers—and your horse,' he repeated. 'If you please, sir.'

'But I don't please,' I said, and with that covered him with my pistol. Down with your pistol, sir, or'—

His answer was a derisive laugh.

'Then if you *will* have it'—And, somewhat nettled, I lowered my pistol and fired point-blank at his horse, for I had no wish to shed his blood if it could be avoided. But there was no result.

'My young sir, let me give you a piece of golden advice,' said he coolly—'namely, never to leave your pistols in your holsters when you are dining at an inn. Or, if you do, recharge them when you go on—especially, if you'll pardon me saying so, on the western section of the Bath road. Oh! you may try the other if you like. There! And now, if you are satisfied, it would be well to get to business. . . . Ah! would you?' he cried in quite a different tone. 'Down with that, man! I have no wish to hurt you; but— So if you *will* be a fool'—

For, after the first moment of bewilderment and chagrin, I had tossed away the useless pistols and whipped out my sword. Now, touching my horse with the spur, I made for my opponent. But he, on his part, was not less quick. With a lusty oath, he swerved his animal aside, none too soon. Then, as I strove to recover myself, there was a flash in my eyes; I felt my horse

stagger under me; and, just as I had freed my feet from the stirrups—again I must have acted by instinct—down it went with a crash, and I was flung heavily to the frozen ground.

For a minute or two I lay, stunned and half-conscious. Luckily for me I had fallen clear of the wounded horse. Then I heard a second report—doubtless that of the shot required to put it out of pain.

When at length I looked up the highwayman had dismounted, and was bending over me, with his bridle on his arm.

'An unfortunate accident, sir,' said he, nodding grimly. 'Honestly, I am grieved—for the horse. Besides, I have no liking for these little misadventures: they are too apt to make bad blood. But you are not hurt, I hope?'

'I think not,' I said, sitting up; and indeed, save that I was shaken and rather sore, and that my head swam a little, I had escaped marvellously well. I glanced round, first at the dead horse, next at my sword glittering in the moonlight a dozen yards off, and last of all at the man standing above me. I could have sworn that a broad smile showed beneath his mask.

'Good!' He held out his hand. 'Can I assist you to rise?'

But I did so without his assistance, wondering what was to follow. For a moment he listened intently, saying nothing. Again my eyes wandered longingly to my sword.

'Had you not better get it?' said he, intercepting the look.

'But, sir'— I broke off, not sure if I had heard aright.

He took me up with a touch of impatience. 'You can use it, I suppose?'

'But . . . I don't understand.'

'Tush! we are wasting time,' he said. 'Get your sword, man. It isn't business; but you seem to be a gentleman of spirit, and—well, I have a fancy to give you another chance.'

Even yet I failed to understand him, so strange was the whole episode, so unexpected such a move on the part of a robber who had his victim at his mercy. But he was plainly in earnest; for as he spoke he doffed his cloak and threw it across his saddle, and proceeded to tether the horse by the

roadside. Whether he were gentleman masquerading as pad or pad trying to masquerade as gentleman, I had naught to do but obey. Yet as I faced him, sword in hand, 'twas in a kind of a dream. Then, as if he read my thoughts:

'You will pardon me, sir, but I could not resist the temptation,' he said in a tone that was quite brisk and friendly; 'although perhaps 'tis scarce fair to you so soon after your fall. But it must be two years, egad! since I had a turn with a gentleman. In the Place Royale it was, with half Paris looking on, and the best swordsman in the King's Guards opposite. The light was rather better than to-night's, and otherwise—— But to work. If you are ready, sir'——

'I am at your service,' said I.

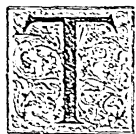
So, saluting, we fell to. As the swords rang together, surprise and curiosity—surprise that such an adventure should have fallen to my lot, curiosity regarding my opponent—still divided my attention. A minute's play, however, sufficed to drive these away, and thereafter I had no thought save for the urgent necessity of the moment. I may lay claim, with due modesty, to some skill in the art: that minute told me I had met a master. From the beginning the highwayman pressed me hard—so hard that my utmost vigilance was strained to withstand him. Once, indeed, I barely saved myself by a quick leap backward. The escape served to steady my nerve. At the least, I thought, let me make a good fight of it!

For a time I held my own. Then, somehow, the uneasy feeling grew that the man was toying with me, and, perchance, sneering behind his mask. I had soon proof of it. I perceived, as I imagined, an opening, and—fell forthwith into the trap. My stroke was easily parried; the counter-stroke caught me unawares. It was the end. I felt a quick, stinging pain in my shoulder; there was a swirl of blood in my head; my sword clattered on the road, and the road itself seemed to leap upwards. And for the rest, my recollection carries only a confused image of moonlight that was now strangely red, of a black mask close to my face, of agony as my wound was examined; and, last of all, of hearing a voice that sounded low and far-off:

'The devil! Half-an-inch lower than I intended!'

HOW SAILORS FIND THEIR WAY AT SEA.

By C. C. MARRIOTT.



OF those whose good fortune it may have been at some period of their lives to make a long ocean voyage—and alike to some of those whose equally good fortune, for various reasons, it may have been never to have done anything of the kind—there is a strange fascination connected with the science of naviga-

tion, accurately, if tersely, described by one of its greatest teachers as 'the art of conducting a ship from one port to another.' So long as the mariner is in sight of land, and he is well acquainted with all the local tides and currents, and his charts are to be depended upon, there would not appear to be any very great difficulty in the art; but when there is nothing between him and his horizon

in every direction—and nothing, it may be, for thousands of miles beyond that—but a vast, unvarying, trackless waste of water, it seems little short of miraculous that the navigator should be able to steer his ship with the nicest accuracy to the one infinitesimally small spot in the great world that he desires to reach. And how is this done with such almost unfailing regularity, such apparent ease? It is the object of this article to endeavour to give an outline, avoiding as far as possible all merely technical details, of the means by which the difficulties, at one time thought by our ancestors insuperable, have been overcome.

Prior to the year 1546, when Gerrard Mercator published his famous chart of the world as then known, now universally adopted under the designation of 'Mercator's Projection,' the parallels and meridians of the old plane charts represented the surface of the globe as a huge chess-board, the squares of equal size, the lines equidistant. The distortion of the higher latitudes was something enormous, and rendered the calculation of the longitude of the ship impossible; and it is to Mercator that modern navigators are indebted for the solution, by dead reckoning, as it is termed, of that difficult problem. Briefly, the revolution he effected was as follows: The representation of the earth as a plane surface for navigation purposes being essential, the question arises, How are the meridians of longitude which meet at the poles, but are far apart at the equator, to be dealt with in such a manner as not to magnify out of all proportion the area of the countries near the poles? Mercator's solution was to draw the meridians equidistant and parallel, as had been done before; but he treated the parallels of latitude in exactly the opposite manner—that is to say, he drew them farther apart as they reached the poles, thus making one distortion counterbalance the other. The relative bearings of all places to one another were by this means preserved on the chart, in spite of the apparent disproportionate enlargement of countries far north or south; and the old danger of one place appearing east of another, when it might in fact be west, was forever removed.

Let us suppose we are taking a voyage to South America. We are in a steamer, and therefore need not trouble ourselves with calculations as to how far it is advisable to proceed upon one tack before changing, or how much we must allow for leeway; we shall have enough to fully occupy our attention without those complications. The Channel having been successfully negotiated, we are now off the Lizard at, say, twelve o'clock noon, and our voyage outward is just commencing. We therefore proceed, in nautical language, to 'take our departure.'

We have provided ourselves with an excellent set of charts; our compasses have been adjusted (though we do not place too much reliance on that circumstance), and our sextants, chronometers,

nautical almanacs and tables, are all in their places. Just a word as to the compasses. Every one is more or less familiar with the instrument known as the mariner's compass, with its magnetised needle popularly supposed to point to the north. As a matter of fact, this needle, except at a few places on the surface of the earth, never points to the true north, but always to a point some degrees east or west of that pole. The angular difference between the true north and the magnetic north, as it is called, is termed the *variation* of the compass; and this variation must always be allowed for when directing the course to be steered. We shall find it marked for us in various places on our charts. It must be clearly distinguished from *deviation*—that is, the result of the pernicious influence of ironwork in the immediate neighbourhood of the compass, which is always endeavouring by insidious means to tempt the fickle instrument from the paths of duty. The fact is, the compass is very easily led astray, and its idiosyncrasies must be constantly studied and allowed for. It is nevertheless absolutely indispensable. We are now saying good-bye to Old England; and it is essential that we should know the exact distance and bearing of the Lizard, from which we take our 'departure,' as that point is the last sight of land we are likely to obtain for some time. The bearing by compass is found to be, say, NE., and the distance we calculate to be twelve miles; we therefore note in our log as our first course the *departure bearing*, reversed of course to SW., as we are supposed to have sailed from the Lizard, and corrected for variation. We now refer to our chart; and, with a parallel rule and the assistance of one of the engraved compasses we find dotted about our chart, we estimate the course we must steer to safely reach our port.

We have now begun our 'day's work.' In a few hours' time we are out of sight of land, and the distances covered (ascertained by our patent log) and the particular courses sailed on every twenty-four hours must be registered with the most scrupulous precision. The knowledge at all times of our latitude and longitude is of the most vital importance; and it is by calculations based on the data furnished by those records that our 'dead reckoning,' as it is called, is enabled to give us that knowledge. At twelve o'clock the next day we proceed to discover the net result of the previous twenty-four hours' run. As we have been sailing in a south-westerly direction, it is obvious that our latitude must be less than that of the Lizard. The log gives us the number of miles we have travelled, and the course is four points of the compass—that is, we have sailed at an angle of forty-five degrees from the Lizard. A simple calculation or a reference to one of our tables with these data gives us the *difference of latitude* we have made; we deduct this difference from the latitude of the Lizard, and the remainder is our

own latitude. But we also require to ascertain our longitude, or distance measured in degrees of the equator from the meridian of Greenwich, before we can find the exact spot on our chart which represents our position. This is not quite so simple. We have been sailing in a westerly direction, and our longitude is, therefore, greater than that of the Lizard; but we have not been sailing along a parallel of latitude, and consequently we certainly cannot consider the number of miles sailed as our distance due west of the Lizard. However, we know our latitude, so we can go back in imagination along that parallel until we meet the meridian of the Lizard, and the length of that parallel will represent, not our difference of longitude, but our *departure*, as it is termed—that is, our distance west of the meridian of the Lizard. This has to be converted into *difference of longitude* by calculation, or reference to our tables, and the difference added to the known longitude of the Lizard. Now we know where we are, and we mark, or ‘prick,’ as sailors say, our position on the chart. That is the point from which we take our next departure in the same manner as we took our first from the Lizard.

What we have just been considering, in a superficial and inadequate manner, is what is known as ascertaining our position ‘by account’ or ‘dead reckoning;’ but, for many reasons, it is not usual or advisable to trust to that means alone, though we never dispense with it altogether. The results obtained in this manner are tested and verified by observations of the sun, moon, and stars, taken with a sextant. The latter method, so far as finding the latitude from the sun’s meridian altitude is concerned, is comparatively simple. Our object is, of course, to ascertain our distance from the equator. As there are three hundred and sixty degrees in every circle, it follows that the number of degrees from our horizon to our zenith (immediately overhead) is ninety—one-fourth of a circle. With our sextant we take, at noon precisely, the altitude of the

sun above the horizon; we then subtract the number of degrees contained in that altitude from ninety degrees, and the difference is the distance of the sun from our zenith. Now, we know that at some place in the tropical regions the sun is immediately overhead at noon, and the sun’s declination at noon (which corresponds to the distance of that place from the equator) is given for every day in the *Nautical Almanac*. Knowing, then, the sun’s distance from our zenith, and also from the equator, we also know our own distance from the equator—that is, our latitude. By a somewhat similar process latitude may be discovered from the altitude of the moon or stars.

To find our longitude by means of an observation of the sun, we have first to ascertain the exact time of taking the observation. This—a by no means easy matter—having been done, we learn from our chronometer the time at Greenwich at that moment; and, remembering that the earth rotates at the rate of nine hundred miles an hour, we can calculate the number of degrees and minutes we are east or west of Greenwich, one hour of time representing fifteen degrees of longitude.

The problem of finding the time at sea is of too complicated and difficult a nature to be explained in a short article; but enough has been said to give a general idea of the means adopted in modern times for finding one’s way at sea. If the rate and direction of all currents were known beyond the possibility of doubt, and if we could always be sure of the alterations in our positions due to gales and hurricanes, it might possibly be safe to rely on dead reckoning alone; but in the present state of our knowledge we cannot dispense with astronomical observations; and if, as sometimes happens, the state of the weather prevents these being taken for several days, it may be weeks, it is scarcely to be wondered at that we occasionally hear of ships being lost at places miles away from their proper positions.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER I.



ALLOW me to begin by introducing myself.

My name is Josiah Simkinson, and I am senior partner in the old-established firm of Simkinson Brothers, Bottlers and Exporters of Bitter Ales, of Bucklersbury Buildings and Shadwell Dock, E.C.

I am a family man, verging on middle age, of rather a plethoric habit, and addicted—perhaps a little too much so—to good living. (I know

my failings, and have no wish to disguise or ignore them.) Existence with me has flowed along prosperously and uneventfully. I am happy to say that I have been the hero of but one adventure, so to term it, and I have no ambition to be the hero of another. My intention, in now taking up my pen, is to furnish my readers with a faithful and unvarnished account of the incident in question.

Simkinson Brothers do a fairly large Continental trade, more especially with France, and the

interests of the firm take me to Paris, and occasionally as far as Lyons or Marseilles, two or three times in the course of each year.

On the occasion to which I now come, having brought my business to a conclusion satisfactory, I hope, to all concerned, I found myself at the Gare du Nord, Paris, in time to book a seat by the 5.45 P.M. express for Boulogne. To all appearance, I was destined to have my compartment to myself, and I was felicitating myself thereon, when, at the last moment, the door was flung open and an elderly lady of uninviting aspect was bundled in by one of the officials; and scarcely was there time to thrust in after her a somewhat shabby-looking carpet-bag, of a kind as much out of date as herself, before the train began to get under way. As our cousins over the water might say, I felt 'pretty considerably riled.' There was a carriage 'for ladies only' attached to the train. Why had she not betaken herself to it, and left me to the not unpleasant solitude of my own thoughts?

My unwelcome travelling companion, who was unmistakably of French nationality, had seated herself in the far corner of the carriage fronting the engine, while I sat in the near corner with my back towards it, so that we were as far apart as the circumstances allowed of our being. I do not set myself up as being a judge of such matters, but in my own mind I put down her age as fifty or thereabouts. She was wearing an ugly black poke-bonnet, from under which straggled two or three limp curls thickly streaked with gray. It was not easy to tell through her veil whether she was well or ill favoured, but I was able to make out that she had a portentously large nose, bridged by a pair of smoke-tinted spectacles. A voluminous cloak, with sleeves which reached to her wrists, enveloped her from throat to feet; finally, her hands were hidden in taffeta gloves several sizes too large for them. At once I set her down as being one of those acidulated spinsters who rarely find any one bold enough to make them an offer of marriage, after which I took no further interest in her; while she, on her side, sat bolt-upright, her hands clasped in front of her, and seemed stonily oblivious of my presence.

I had lunched well, and was in a comfortable frame of mind; and we had not long left the outskirts of Paris behind before a pleasant drowsiness began to steal over me, to which I yielded myself up readily enough; indeed, I should have been glad to sleep right through to Boulogne. It was a close, muggy day towards the end of September, and presently finding my fur-lined overcoat (a birthday present from my wife) somewhat oppressive, I took it off and laid it on the seat next my own. Then I settled myself afresh in my corner, folded my arms, and shut my eyes.

I had been oblivious of all mundane matters

for some time, when a more than ordinarily piercing shriek on the part of the engine abruptly broke my slumbers. It took me about half-a-minute to collect my faculties, and then I opened my eyes very wide indeed.

What had become of my travelling companion, the unprepossessing spinster? She had vanished as completely as if she had flown through the window, leaving nothing to remind me of her—not even her shabby carpet-bag. I rubbed my eyes, and rubbed them again. And well I might, for, in place of the elderly female with the limp curls, the big nose, and the spectacles, there was now seated in the opposite corner a very pretty and fashionably attired young woman of about twenty summers, with a charming little tip-tilted nose, big blue-gray eyes, and an abundance of fluffy straw-coloured hair. She was wearing a tailor-made gown of dark-blue cloth, a jacket *à la mode*, and a coquettish little soft felt hat with a pheasant's quill in it.

If it be rude to stare persistently at a lady, then was I very rude indeed. She was gazing up at the lamp in the roof, seemingly in a meditative mood; but presently she lowered her eyes, and turning her head slightly, looked me full in the face. After a few seconds her mouth began to twitch, then a twinkle came into her eyes, the rosy lips parted in a smile, and the end of it was an explosion of musical laughter. Never had I felt myself look more like a nin-compoop.

'How do you do, Mistare Seemkinson?' she said as soon as some measure of gravity had come back to her. 'I hope you have enjoyed your—how call you it?—your nap, and that you find yourself all the better for it.' She spoke the most delightful broken English imaginable.

'How! You know my name?' I stammered, with a gasp of astonishment.

'Is it not there, on the label of your *necessaire-de-toilette*, for any person to read?'

I had not recovered from my stupefaction, and was wholly at a loss what to say next.

But presently my fair companion moved to the seat opposite mine, by which time her mirth had toned itself down to a fascinating smile.

Bending forward a little, she said, addressing me in French:

'It was a fairly good disguise, was it not, monsieur? And keener eyes than yours were taken in by it. But it is time to put an end to your mystification, which, however, can only be done by confiding my story to you—the story of a most unhappy girl—if you will condescend to listen to it. You are an Englishman, monsieur; and there is that in your face which convinces me I shall do right in trusting you.'

She was serious enough by now. Her beautiful eyes were gazing into mine with a sort of pathetic entreaty, or so I read their expression.

I even fancied that a tiny tear stood in a corner of each of them.

'I need scarcely assure you, mademoiselle,' I gravely replied, 'that whatever you may choose to confide to me will never pass my lips to any one without your permission. But here we are at Creil,' I added. 'Had you not better delay beginning what you have to tell me till the train has started again?'

She nodded assent, and taking up one of my newspapers, at once, to all appearance, became immersed in it. Fortunately no one invaded our compartment, and a few moments later we were once more speeding on our way. Then she put down the paper and began her narrative.

'My name is Fannie Dufarge. My father, a Frenchman of good family, married an Englishwoman, but I lost my mother at an early age. We moved from the provinces to Paris when I was eight years old, and there I have lived ever since. In France, as you are doubtless aware, monsieur, it is customary for parents to arrange the marriages of their children, and those most concerned have very little voice in the matter. It is a state of affairs in which my father is a firm believer. Some time ago he chose a husband for me, and insisted on my accepting him, although well aware that I loathed and detested the man in question.

'At length home became unendurable, and, as a last resource, I determined on flight. But my father seems to have had some suspicion of my intention, and for the last fortnight my movements have been carefully watched, while at the same time the preparations for my wedding were hurried forward. This morning, however, I contrived to escape to the house of a friend who was in my confidence and had prepared for me the disguise in which you first saw me. But my escape was discovered, and one of the private detectives employed by my father was on the platform of the Nord terminus to make sure that I did not get away by the very train in which we are now travelling. When you went to sleep I seized the occasion to divest myself of my disguise, drop it out of the window, and become my proper self. Such is my story, monsieur. I may seem to have acted rashly, but I would sooner have poisoned myself than have married the man my father chose for me. Do not say that you blame me over much.'

She put her little hands together, and looked at me with such a prettily pathetic air that there and then I felt strongly tempted to kiss her. But such privileges are not for elderly married men who happen to be stout and slightly bald into the bargain.

'Blame you, my dear mademoiselle!' I exclaimed. 'On the contrary, I think you have done a very right thing, and I heartily applaud your courage. But where are you bound for, if I may be permitted to ask?'

'My ticket is for London.'

'You have friends there?'

She shook her head sadly. '*Hélas!* no. I know no one there. My uncle, my mother's brother, lives at—what do you call the place?—Invaerness in Scotland. When I reach London I shall telegraph to him to come and fetch me.'

'In that case you will have to make some little stay in London before your uncle can join you. But here we are at Amiens,' I continued, as the train began to slacken speed. 'There is a wait here of five minutes. Will you permit me to have the pleasure of procuring a cup of coffee or some other refreshment for you?'

But Mdlle. Dufarge replied that she would prefer waiting till we reached Boulogne; so as soon as the train came to a stand I alighted and strolled down the platform towards the buffet on my own account. There I learned that, owing to the break-down of a mineral train, the express was likely to be delayed for some little time. That being the case, I did not hurry back to my carriage, but lighted a cigarette and sauntered to the far end of the platform, turning over in my mind the affair of my pretty travelling companion, and wondering whether Georgina would object to my offering her the shelter of my roof till her uncle should have time to arrive from Scotland.

When at length I got back to my compartment I found it empty. Mdlle. Dufarge had vanished even more completely than the elderly spinster had done; that had merely resulted in a change of identity, whereas this was a case of total disappearance. That her absence was merely temporary I did not doubt; but presently my attention was drawn to a small crowd of persons, among whom I could distinguish the uniforms of several police agents, surrounding a *fiacre* a little distance away. Some impulse drew me to the spot. Judge, then, of my amazement when in one of the occupants of the vehicle I recognised my late travelling companion, the two others being officers of the law! The light from a near-at-hand lamp shone full on her pale face, with its firm-set lips and contracted brows. It was no longer the April face of a pretty, wilful runaway which could change from smiles to tears at will, but that of a resolute, high-souled woman, with the courage of a dozen ordinary men enclosed in the compass of her little body. Marvellous was the change. Her gaze, wandering indifferently over the little crowd of faces surrounding the cab, seemed to me to dwell on mine for the space of a single second and then to pass on, but not by so much as the flicker of an eyelid did she betray any recognition of me.

But scarcely had I time to note these particulars before the driver cracked his whip, the crowd parted right and left, and the *fiacre* was driven rapidly away. Then I found my tongue.

'What would you?' said a courteous railway

official, with an outspreading of his palms, in reply to a question I had put to him. 'The young woman just arrested is said to be mixed up in a plot against the government. The police here were telegraphed to from Paris to look out for her. Ah, bah! why can't women leave politics alone, and content themselves with looking after their babies and the *pot-au-feu*?'

At this juncture there came a strident cry of '*En voiture, messieurs*;' and I was compelled to hurry off to my carriage. For several minutes after the train had started I sat like a man dumfounded, my mind full of the scene I had just witnessed, and of all that had led up to it.

Was the story told me by Mdlle. Dufarge about herself true or false? Had she really run away from home in order to avoid a hateful marriage?—or had she merely been imposing upon me with a harmless piece of fiction for the furtherance of her own ends, whatever those might be? These were questions impossible to answer; and yet it seemed hard to believe that so much beauty and apparent innocence could be leagued together for the furtherance of one of those plots with which the political atmosphere of France was just then rife. But, as we know from history, women have been plotters from the beginning of time.

(*To be continued.*)

ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BOOKS.

By JOSEPH SHAYLOR.



WHEN is a book dead? This is a question often asked by those who are interested in books, and the answer usually given is, 'It is quite impossible to say.' It is to the elucidation of this important question and answer that the following remarks are directed, and also to the pros and cons of the life, the suspended animation, and the death of books. Judging from the enormous output which now takes place, and the ephemeral existence of many of the works published, it would appear doubtful whether many of them can be said to have really lived. In spite, however, of this, I would hazard the opinion that, with certain reservations, which will be mentioned later on, it is quite impossible to state that a book is absolutely dead. The nearest approach to the death, or, as I would rather term it, the want of life in a book is when the author is dead, when the subject of the book has ceased to be of any public or private interest, when the publisher has fallen out of the ranks of the trade, or has discontinued placing the work in his catalogue, or when the book is, from a literary or critical point of view, practically worthless.

Farther on I shall give some few illustrations of this book-asphyxia; but before doing so I should like to point out some of the causes which, I think, tend to place books in a condition of suspended animation.

The majority of books published are written principally to gratify some whim, vanity, or fad on the part of the author. The balance and those which have the longer vitality may, I think, be divided into two classes—books which are produced by authors who write for a livelihood, and those produced by authors who write for the love of authorship, and who, having something to say, know how to say it.

The works in the former class may be looked upon as only of a transient character, yet even

here there are many books which develop a life little anticipated by their authors. For instance, when a writer has published his experiences of a trip taken probably for pleasure, and has during his travels visited some previously little-known place or region, and made some remarks concerning the undeveloped condition of the country likely to prove of interest to traders or settlers, this is not an infrequent way in which attention is directed to his book.

Another stimulus is that of colonisation and the expansion of our sphere of influence in some partly explored continent, such as Africa. The land hunger which now exists for that country has caused books upon the northern, eastern, southern, western, and even the central districts to be sought after. The demand for these books has of late been so brisk that extensive catalogues have been prepared by some booksellers, giving minute information of all works helpful or necessary to those visiting the Dark Continent; and these are eagerly bought whether they are good or bad. Many booksellers could give ample illustration of this fact, and they have often been thankful that an incident of this nature has occurred to help them to dispose of stock which had already been far too long upon their shelves.

Authors who write either for a livelihood or from a love of literature are themselves answerable at times for the want of life from which their books occasionally suffer. This arises from a lack of trade knowledge and of the channels through which books are sold. It often happens that an author who has adopted literature as a profession finds that his first serious effort has proved a brilliant success. This success may, however, not have been attained solely through the ability of the author, but be largely due to the tact and judgment of the publisher. For it is through the publisher's influence that the book has been well boomed; he has also looked

well after its advertising, and has used his trade machinery to place it effectively upon the market. But how often the author loses sight of all this work done on his behalf! Again, by his success the author becomes unduly elated, and for his next book demands perhaps an excessive royalty, which his publisher is unable to give. He therefore goes to another, with the result that the first publisher ceases to interest himself in the original production, and by degrees it drops out of advertisements and gradually dies, unless, indeed, the author scores another brilliant success.

Many authors are known by one particular book, upon which their popularity is founded. It occasionally happens, however, that an author's permanent reputation may rest upon his second, third, or even a later work. In this case it is only fair to state that a demand would be created for his previous books, even though they were issued by different publishers. My remarks, therefore, principally refer to an author who has made a reputation by his first book only.

In furtherance of this argument, there has grown up during recent years a factor which has not only a considerable influence in the direction above indicated, but also upon the earnings of some of our leading authors. I mean the literary agent. His interference between author and publisher is not, however, without its drawbacks; for, when an author is issuing his works through a publisher who is just and honourable in his dealings, it would be wiser to leave the financial arrangements in his hands, for the commission which has to be paid to the agent must naturally come out of the author's pocket. Neither can it be permanently beneficial to an author's reputation, or to the literature of his country, for him to allow his work to be practically put up to auction and bought by the highest bidder, irrespective of the reputation and influence which belong to a great publishing house. This fact is clearly demonstrated by some living authors, whose early works gained an almost spontaneous recognition, and who have since, through the inducements offered by the literary agent, greatly overwritten themselves. Owing to the constant demand for some book from their pen, the literary quality of their writings has deteriorated; and thus, by attempting too much, they have shattered, probably for ever, the reputation acquired in the early part of their career.

If an author be dealing with a publisher who is interested in the works he produces and in his authors, it is better in the long-run for him to stand by the publisher through whom his first book was issued. A volume has been written on *Books Fatal to Authors*, and might also be written on authors who have been fatal to the sale of their own books. Not infrequently, by his anxiety for immediate recognition, without

scaling the heights which lead to permanent success, a writer falls a victim to that race for riches and popularity which is, and has been, the downfall of so many.

Another factor which operates upon the life of books is the number of well-regulated and brilliantly edited daily and weekly journals, to which must be added the immense array of our monthly periodical literature. Many of these contain short and pithy articles, combined with news which suits the general reader, and is considered sufficient by those who think reading a necessity rather than a pleasure. It should, however, be remembered by authors that contributions to *current* literature are not always contributions to permanent literature, and a vigorous or long life cannot be expected for these productions.

The reasons for the life of a book are sometimes difficult to understand, and it is quite impossible to point out with certainty the exact reasons which stimulate or give renewed life. The following example will illustrate the career, and serve as an example, of many books which at one time had almost dropped out of circulation, but by some fortunate occurrence, or by their own intrinsic value, have eventually attained a permanent success. The work I have in my mind is Edward FitzGerald's translation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. The incidents in the growth of the popularity of this book I have heard told by Mr Quaritch more than once at his trade sale dinners. The translation of this poem had been published some few years, and FitzGerald had a number of copies still remaining unsold. Wishing to get rid of them, he asked Mr Quaritch to take the entire remainder off his hands; and this was done, more to please FitzGerald than with any expectation of effecting a sale. After a considerable time, finding there was still no demand for the work, he placed some copies outside his shop, and marked them one shilling each. This, however, proving unsuccessful, he then marked them down to sixpence each; and as they did not move at that price, they were offered at fourpence, and finally placed in a box of all sorts at one penny each. At the latter price they found a ready sale, and with the disposal of the last copies FitzGerald's masterpiece appears to have had its start. Mr Quaritch says that from this period there commenced a steady demand for that book, and these original copies are now worth almost their weight in gold, one having recently been sold for the sum of twenty guineas. FitzGerald and his translations have now acquired a world-wide popularity, with the result that a cult has been formed which yearly sings the praises of the great Persian poet, and with feast and becoming ceremony discourses in graceful eloquence to the memory of his first English translator. Who can possibly say how it was that this masterpiece remained so long without recognition, or what eventually caused that interest to be

awakened which has now placed the book amongst our most treasured classics?

It is well known that much of the juvenile literature of sixty years ago may, from many points of view, be considered dead, only a small part being now reprinted, or even known to the present generation. Yet many of the books by such well-known authors as Mrs Sherwood, Mrs Opie, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs Hoffland, and others are occasionally inquired for. This shows that they still linger in the memory of some of their former readers, and their renewed life arises probably from the wish of some who are well stricken in years to give to their grandchildren books which were a charm to their own early days. By these means the vitality of a book is occasionally handed down to the third, fourth, and even later generations.

Mention should be made of a few technical books which in most instances may be considered really dead. This is brought about through no fault in their character or production, but by the steady advance of ulterior influences. I refer particularly to educational literature and to the altered conditions in the system of teaching, as well as the changes made by the Council of Education through their annual code. These alterations often render many thousands of books worthless, and fit only for waste-paper.

New Acts of parliament, or amendments to those in operation, frequently render the various treatises on or expositions of particular Acts quite worthless. This argument also applies to works on photography and other sciences in which new discoveries and advances are continually being made.

Sometimes books are conveyed to fresh classes of readers, and new life given to them, through a channel which is known as the 'remainder market.' As is said in the trade, they are 'slaughtered;' but that does not necessarily mean that they are killed. I must explain to the uninitiated that the remainder of a book is the balance of copies left after the ordinary sales have practically ceased. These are offered at a very low price, or sold by auction to the highest bidder. By this means the books get into a cheaper market, a new medium is opened for their sale, and occasionally a fresh lease of life is given to them.

To illustrate this point more fully: through their cheapness these books are sometimes bought for distribution to free libraries, for presentation to school libraries, or to be sent out to our colonies. Here again, through their cheapness, they are sold to a fresh public, a new market is tapped, the copies to be disposed of in this manner are soon sold, and in some cases a second edition of a book has thus been required, with the result that a steady sale for many years has followed. Sometimes a portion of a large edition is in the above manner disposed of on purpose to make the book known in fresh channels. This acts

as an advertisement, and occasionally leads to the balance of an edition being sold at the original published price.

Those who follow the lists of 'Books Wanted' in the trade journals may frequently notice that in these advertisements there are required books which have been sold off, and are considered dead and forgotten. For some reason, however, the interest in them has revived, or they are required either on account of the subject-matter, or from the fact of the author having subsequently become famous; or, again, many are sought after by collectors of first editions.

It will be obvious from these facts that books that are termed failures are not necessarily wanting in merit; their want of life may arise from the fact of their author being unknown, or in some from want of appreciation by the book-buying public.

Sometimes a publisher, for the sake of his own reputation, prefers sending what he considers his dead stock to the paper-mills to be reduced to pulp, and so made again into paper. This is a practice to be commended, as it will often cause a book with an after-recognised value to become scarce and in great demand.

The books that appear most frequently in the remainder market are works of biography and poetry and those upon religious subjects. To this list must be added works by unknown authors; but, as I have previously pointed out, authors of little note at first may afterwards become famous, and this invariably creates a demand for or enhances the value of their early writings.

There is in literary circles a growing attention directed to the question how young and unknown authors can obtain a publisher and the support of the public, and so prevent their first productions from being still-born. Much has been done in this direction by the Authors' Society; and although publishers have the MSS. which are submitted to them carefully read, yet, as in the past so in the present, occasionally mistakes are made by refusing MSS. which are afterwards accepted by other publishers and prove a great success. A long catalogue might be made of mistakes in this direction, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *Jane Eyre*, from Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*—a book which, besides the difficulty found in obtaining a publisher for it, almost ruined *Fraser's Magazine*, in whose pages it first appeared—down to Drummond's *Natural Law*, and others. Some of these were refused by more than one publisher. With the mass of MSS. in existence, these mistakes in judgment are inevitable, particularly in the case of unknown authors. Under these circumstances, it is open to suggestion whether some partial return to the old system of patronage is not desirable.

Publishers frequently display great courage and commendable enterprise in projecting such schemes as the *Dictionary of National Biography* and many series of works on science and biography. In all

these large sums are invested. Many of them, by the lapse of time and the advance and development in the subjects upon which they treat, would become obsolete but for the fresh life which is continually being infused into them in the form of new editions.

The present *ex libris* craze, or that known as grangerising, is accountable for the destruction of many books; as, in the enthusiasm of collectors, the book-plates and illustrations are preserved, but the books themselves are wasted.

Another reason put forth for the death of books is the quality of the paper now used in their production. This, we are told, is of such a perishable nature that at no distant period it will decay and crumble to powder.

The question naturally arises, If so few books by unknown authors are published, what becomes of all the MSS. which are returned from the publishers with thanks, and which never reach the printing-office? Their number must be legion, and even to publishers the solution of the problem remains a mystery. A short time ago Mr Andrew Lang, speaking upon this subject at the Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh, is reported to have said: 'Out of every hundred who write novels only one was fortunate enough to get his work printed; and as about nine hundred secured a publisher, the novelists of Great Britain he calculated to number about one hundred thousand.'

It is not intended to bring within the scope of this article any detailed account of the rare 'first editions' of many of our classics, which occasionally fetch at auctions such fabulous sums, and which, from a financial point of view, are very much alive. A separate paper might well be written upon this subject; still, one or two illustrations would not be out of place as showing what a high value collectors place upon these masterpieces, which in their early existence were considered of little worth. Gray's *Elegy* (first edition, 1751), published to sell at sixpence, realised at auction, in 1892, fifty-nine pounds. At the same sale Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* (first edition, 1807) reached sixteen pounds ten shillings; while in Boston, Mass., Poe's *Tamerlane* (first edition, forty pages) realised three hundred and seventy pounds.

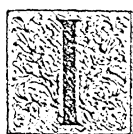
Take a modern instance—the case of Richard Jefferies, who barely earned a livelihood by his writings during his lifetime, yet after his death collectors paid excessive sums for first editions of his books. One of his pamphlets—*Suicide*—being very scarce, three or four pounds is frequently given for a copy, though it was originally published at only threepence. It will be remembered that Keats died a poor man, but recently two of his MSS. were sold by auction—*Endymion* fetching under the hammer six hundred and ninety-five pounds, while *Lamia* realised at the same time three hundred and five pounds.

Of all scarce books which have once been popular, early juveniles, school-books, and old cookery-books are probably the most difficult to obtain. This arises from the destructive character of the owners of this class of literature.

To return to the question of the 'Life and death of books,' Milton wrote in his *Areopagitica* that 'it was better to kill a man than a good book.' I would venture the opinion that it were far easier to kill a man than to kill a good book. Reviewers have frequently made the attempt, and in some few cases have partially succeeded, but in many others they have miserably failed. It is recorded that upon the publication of William Cowper's *Poems* there was scarcely a review which did not load them with the most scurrilous abuse, and condemn them as fit only for the butter-shop; but they still rank among our national poetry. The power of the reviewer to-day is gradually becoming less, for the reading public are now more in a position to decide for themselves upon the merits of a book.

I am confirmed, however, in the opinion that it is quite impossible with absolute certainty to say that a book is really dead. If it is a good book, its life may be for a time in a state of suspense, yet it is quite within the bounds of possibility that some of the causes above mentioned may bring it into demand, and eventually lead to its success—a success which, though attained late in its existence, may in its eventual career be one of which both author and publisher will be justly proud.

SALMON-FISHING ON THE NAVER, SUTHERLANDSHIRE.



If you suffer from insomnia, and you are rich, rent a portion of a salmon-river; if you are poor, go to Innerleithen and fish for ten hours a day on the free water on the Tweed, and your insomnia will 'fold its tents like the Arabs, and as silently steal away.'

The Naver is not a difficult river to fish. You have no left-hand casting, as you have on the Shin; and it has an advantage over the Helmsdale: you can follow the most peaceful of all recreations without being disturbed by the passing of the trains from Inverness and Thurso; you have solitude—something of the getting into a lone land, the silence and peacefulness of a long

and beautiful Highland glen. I remember once when I was fishing above Dalvina Lodge two stags came to drink. There are not many salmon-rivers left in Scotland upon which such an incident could occur. The Naver is eighteen miles long, rising in the shadow of Ben Klibrech, and flowing almost due north to the little village of Bettyhill, where it enters the sea. Bettyhill is famous in the story of Celtic depopulation; it is one of the villages formed by the crofters when they were driven from their homes to make room for the big sheep-farms. They don't care to speak about their troubles; but there is no doubt they believe that one day they will be back in the strath again. As you walk towards Altnaharra you see the ruins of their cottages and the stones that mark the outlines of their gardens.

The fishing season opens on the 10th of January, when I have sometimes gone north accompanied only by a collie dog. But what a companion a collie dog can be! How he grows in your affections, faithful to you as Rab was to James and Ailie in Dr John Brown's immortal story!

It is curious to find yourself alone in a Highland lodge in winter. You are familiar enough with the scene in August, when you can look away across the moor, purple with the bloom of heather, rendered cheerful by the song of birds, perhaps the pleasant music—for you as an angler—of the burns rolling in spate. But it is different in midwinter. Many days are what Walter Pater calls a 'harmonious gray;' you may have frost and blinding snow; when you go out in the morning you find that the branches on the birch-trees sparkle with a fringe of silver. The little lochs, that in summer will yield you a trout at every cast, are frozen over.

Syre, in Strathnaver, is a characteristic Highland lodge, and one of the most out-of-the-way in the Highlands. You only get letters delivered to you twice a week, and a telegram costs twelve shillings for portage. It is forty miles to the shop in Thurso where your food comes from, and sixteen miles to the nearest railway station, over Kinbrace, one of the bleakest moors in Scotland. If you ask the parish minister to dinner he will have a drive of twenty-six miles. But the truth is, you are in no great need of company; you come home tired after a long day on the river. Casting twenty odd yards of line with a salmon-rod is no easy task. It is harder work than cricker, harder than football or hunting. The way the fly comes round to your side of the river, and requires to be cast again, takes it out of you as a long climb in the Alps, say from the Riffelberg to the summit of the Breithorn. Breakfast at eight—ham and eggs and salmon-steaks—and then your gillie comes to tell you the state of the river, and to help you to select the flies with which you are to do battle for the day.

What a fascination salmon-fishing has for those

who have experienced it with any reasonable amount of success! There is the river with its familiar casts; season after season you go to them looking for the unexpected. Perhaps you have never killed a thirty-pounder; to-day he may be waiting for you in some silent pool or breaking stream. I remember, on the Tweed, talking to Mr John Bright about salmon-fishing. He said it was a fine sport if you caught fish; but then there is that 'if'!

The best chance on the Naver in the early spring is Syre Pool. It is deep, and a fish in his long struggle up the stream is likely to rest for a time. You come to it about midday. It is not an easy cast; but you must get your fly as well across as you can. As the fly is nearing your side of the river something seems to touch your line; you take a step or two back, and cast again. This time the fish makes sure of it; there comes the welcome pull under water, the rod bends with a tremor, and away goes the line from the reel. How the hooking a salmon transforms for you the whole scene! There is a different light now on Ben Klibrech. 'The splendour falls on castle walls and snowy summits old in story.' Away he goes down the river, as if bent on regaining the sea from whence he came. Again and again he will move slowly back to where you hooked him, and tug at your line, and this is not a pleasant sensation—it is even worse than when he leaps in the air; but the steady pressure of arm and rod begins to tell, and he is tired. He takes one more run to the rocks at the foot of the pool, and for a moment there is a feeling of uncertainty, 'doubt, hesitation, and pain;' your line slackens, and the fly soars over your head. There is the sad reality that your fish is gone. It takes all your philosophy to comfort you. I am not sure that many things in life vex one more than the loss of a fresh-run salmon. To walk from the Pavilion at Lord's in a big match and be bowled first ball is bad enough, but it's not half so bad as losing a salmon. But killing a salmon may not at all times be unattended with regret. How often they make a gallant fight! I remember once hooking a fish on the Naver on the beat next the sea, just below the shepherd's cottage. He rose to me in the pool, and almost immediately undertook the ascent of the stream that stretches above it. It is a long stream, and was, I knew, too much for him; but I let him go, giving just the amount of pressure that would tire him before he could reach his goal. There was something pathetic in that hard struggle up the river against the weight of rod and line, and the collapse that had to come at the finish, when he came back straight as an arrow into the gillie's net.

The greatest number of fish we ever killed in the spring was one hundred and fifty-three, fishing two and sometimes three rods; but the water was in perfect order from the middle of

March to the end of April. The largest fish I ever killed weighed twenty-four and a half pounds. I remember Mr Vernon, who used to play cricket for Middlesex, killing one that weighed thirty pounds.

If you had your choice of only one beat on the river you would choose number three; it is a perfect piece of water in its succession of stream and pool. But late in the season the three miles immediately below the loch are best. A characteristic of the Naver is, the fish do not remain in the pools; they are merely birds of passage on their way to the loch, and you do not have to cast over the same fish day after day. As to wading, there is not much to be done on the river, except on beat four, when you have to wade almost every pool. Parson's Pool takes half-an-hour to fish, all the time nearly up to your arms in water. When the wind is from the north, blowing from the Faroe Islands and Iceland, it is, to say the least of it, bracing. Fishing it one day when I had to come ashore three or four times to have the ice broken from the rings of my rod, I was grateful when my task was finished; but I got little sympathy from my Sancho Panza. He remarked that 'it would be best to give it another fly.'

You need never lose hope on the Naver. I remember going down to the foot of the river. It was bitterly cold, frost and snow; in fact, just about hopeless. I met the river-watcher, and he shook his head, saying it was 'no sort of weather for fishing.' We were at a pool called Breeding-Box. I got out on to a rock where I believe no one has ever ventured before. I let my fly sink deep below the wall of rock, working the fly slowly, in the Tweed fashion. I killed two fish weighing twelve pounds each. As Charles Carse of Sprouston used to say, 'Let the fly hang over their noses.'

But there is another angler on the river besides you. Now and again he may see you, and I have no doubt he does; but he takes good care that you never see him. There are a few otters on the Naver, but not many. I once saw the footprints of one; he had made his way to a small island near Dalmalard. The keeper set a trap for him, and the next day as I was wending my way homewards in the gloaming I found him—I must say with regret—in the trap. When I came in sight he never moved, but simply lay and watched me, doubtless wondering what it all meant. Was he to have no more pleasant times on the river, no more passing to the lochs in the dripping heather, or stealing into some hiding-place known only to himself, as daybreak came sweeping up from Ben Morven? As our knowledge of animal life increases, our sympathies with them deepen; they have capacity for pleasure and for pain like ourselves, and instincts and intelligence often superior to our own.

Fishing on the Naver many years ago, I met Mr Sydney Buxton, and have read with pleasure his article on 'Fly-fishing' in the *Nineteenth Century* for January. I cannot, however, quite agree with him when he says that 'salmon flies do not resemble any known article of diet.' When as boys we used to fish for trout in the Tweed, we continually hooked parr or young salmon. These little fish feed freely on the river flies; they pass down to the sea, returning after a time as salmon; the parr of a few ounces has grown into a fish of many pounds in weight, and I hardly think it need cause him much surprise to find that the tiny neutral-coloured fly upon which he used to feed has developed, say, into a 'Jock Scott' or a 'Silver Gray,' like Joseph putting on a coat of many colours. After all, Sir Herbert Maxwell's contention that fish are colour-blind may be correct; in which case there would be nothing to distinguish the salmon from the trout fly save the increase in size. I have seen a salmon rise to a natural fly on the Naver; and there is no doubt they feed freely in freshwater. In fishing the Corrib River at Galway, I have often in the early morning fed them with prawns; they lie under the bridge in shoals, and if you throw a prawn into the water one of them will rise and take it.

Fishing in the lochs in the Lewis, when the wind would die away we used to wade out on the long sandy ridges to the deep water, and wait for a salmon to rise to the natural fly. Using only a trout-rod, and casting over him with a small loch-fly, we killed many fish; you only require a little patience and plenty of line on your reel. How the first run of a ten-pound salmon on a nine-foot trout-rod would have delighted Izaak Walton!

For many years on the Naver the kelts have been carefully marked before being returned to the water; being hooked and landed seems to give them little pain. You frequently land fish that have been only a few days before marked by yourself or your friends.

And writing about a collie dog as a companion: at one time I went out on the river with one called Yarrow. If a fish rose down the stream below where I was casting, he would walk quietly down among the heather to the spot to watch until I came. There used to be a little food taken out for his midday meal; when he was eating it, at the slightest sound from the reel the food was forgotten and he was off to see the sport. He had one trouble; he could never understand why we kept some fish and put others back into the water.

Sunday is a great day when you are alone in a Highland lodge. You have been fishing all week almost from dawn to sunset, and the strain has told on you, and you are grateful for rest. There is no church to go to, so you may light your pipe and settle down in front of the peat-

fire to read. You gather your books round you as you would gather your old friends—Ruskin, Tennyson, Browning, Oliver Goldsmith. Outside there is the lonely strath and the peaceful river, perhaps the shepherd passing from old Syre with some sheep, and above on the Altnaharra road, within sight of Ben Loyal, a stag and some hinds making a line of beauty on the hillside; and you take up a volume of Ruskin, and read what

he has to say about railways: 'You have put a railroad-bridge over the fall of Schaffhausen. You have tunnelled the cliffs of Lucerne by Tell's chapel; you have destroyed the Clarens shore of the Lake of Geneva; there is not a quiet valley in England you have not filled with bellowing fire.'

May it be long before bonnie Strathnaver is filled with bellowing fire!

SOME OLD INDUSTRIES: PIN AND CLOCK MAKING.



HERE are many instances on record of certain industries having left localities with which they have been identified. In other cases, fewer in number, when one trade has been lost another has taken its place. Coventry is a notable example of this, the manufacture of cycles having there superseded the ribbon trade. There is a third class, the occupants of which are rarer still, in which an industry, having temporarily disappeared, has been successfully revived. The ancient city of Gloucester, somewhat singularly, furnishes an illustration of all three conditions being found in one place. In the first place, its celebrated bell-foundries, for instance, have disappeared, never to return probably; secondly, its engineering works and railway-carriage and wagon works, to say nothing of smaller manufactures, added to its large corn and timber imports, have of comparatively recent years sprung into profitable being; and, thirdly, the manufacture of pins, once one of the staple industries of the city, has, after an interval of forty years, been recommenced.

Although pins were made in this country so far back as the reign of Henry IV., it was not until 1626 that one Tylsly introduced their manufacture to Gloucester. In 1837, when the Queen came to the throne, pin-making was the most important industry in the city. There were three factories, employing some fifteen hundred or two thousand hands. The wire was drawn, cut, and pointed in the factories, in which horse-power was utilised; and the heading or knobbing was done in the homes of the workers. The introduction of solid heads, which required more elaborate machinery, and necessitated the work being done entirely in the factory, probably caused the decline of the trade. At any rate, the last of the three factories was removed to Birmingham about 1855. It is an interesting fact that in 1830 the Queen, then the Princess Victoria, on the occasion of a visit to Gloucester with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, inspected one of the factories, and carried away specimens of the pins made there. Where are those pins now? If they shared the fate of their kind they have probably been irretrievably lost!

From 1855 until some five or six years ago no pins were made in Gloucester; but a firm then commenced the manufacture of these indispensable adjuncts of daily life in an unpretentious way. So rapidly did the business grow, however, that a large factory had to be built last year. Here a considerable number of hands are engaged, night and day, and seven tons of hairpins alone are being turned out every week. There is practically no limit to the scope for a business of this sort; since millions of pins are made and lost every year, the demand is large and constant.

Dean Tucker, of Gloucester, had very exalted notions of the pin-making craft. He said that a pin-maker was a more useful and valuable member of society than Raphael. This assertion drew down upon his head a rebuke from no less a personage than Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter, who condemned the very reverend gentleman's observation as that of a narrow mind—of a mind that was confined to the mere object of commerce, that saw with a microscopic eye but a part of the great machine of life, and thought the small part to be the whole; whereas commerce was the means, not the end, of happiness or pleasure, the end being a rational enjoyment by means of the arts and sciences. It was, therefore, foolish to set the means higher than the end, and equivalent to saying that the brick-maker was superior to the architect. Whether the dean retorted this deponent knoweth not. There is this to be said for his view, however: the pin is much more universal in its uses and applications and much more widely appreciated than a Raphael or any other 'old master.' It can stir the most evil passions that slumber in the breast of man, and when put to legitimate uses (if it is to be found when wanted) can invoke the sweetest blessings of peace that mortals can desire to enjoy. Its potentialities are enormous; its power to move men most marvellous. We can live and die without ever hearing of Raphael; but we need the pin from the cradle to the grave. Even Sir Joshua Reynolds admitted that Raphael was an acquired taste; Michael Angelo was always the highest incarnation of art to him, and it was only after long study that Raphael's great qualities conquered his early disappointment.

Although cloth-mills still flourish in the Stroud valley, and Cotswold sheep are still, of course, in the front rank, the wool trade is not so extensively carried on in Gloucestershire as was once the case. It is said that many of the churches which abound in the county are monuments to the munificence of wealthy wool-merchants of the Middle Ages. Camden says that the wool of the Cotswold was held in much esteem on the Continent; Drayton in his *Polyolbion* praises the abundance and whiteness of the Cotswold fleeces; and Rudder, the historian, remarks that it was Cotswold sheep which Edward IV. presented to the Spanish monarch, and that there is a tradition that the animals to which Spain was indebted for her wool trade were procured from the Gloucestershire hills.

The manufacture of clocks is another industry of which Gloucester was once and is no longer an important centre. Washbourn, Peyton, Thackwell, Miles, Higgins, and Weight were all Gloucester clockmakers, whose names may still be seen upon 'grandfather' clocks. Henry Weight made upwards of a hundred church and public clocks, which are scattered over ten different counties. He made the clock presented to English Bicknor by the Queen in 1842. His foreman, William Greening, and one of his apprentices, Henry Bloxsome—the latter's brother drove the coach from Gloucester to London for nearly fifty years—were both subsequently engaged by E. G. Dent, and were with him when the Westminster clock at the Victoria Tower was made; and Greening, while with Messrs E. Smith & Sons of Clerkenwell, constructed the large clock by order of the Government for Bombay. It is related of Henry Weight that he put the chimes on the clock at St Nicholas Church, Gloucester, in forty minutes from the time in which the tune 'Minerva' was written for the purpose by the assistant-organist of Gloucester Cathedral.

A son of Mr Weight carried on business in Gloucester, where he was one of the city councillors, until his death some six months ago, when he was succeeded in turn by his son. He was full of information on the subject of old clocks and clock-faces. The Finemores, of Birmingham, who made a speciality of painted clock-dials, were a Gloucestershire family. Some of these dials are works of art, and of late years have fetched as much as £15 each. The elaborateness of the painting depended upon the quality and price of the dial. The commonest was the familiar one of bluish white, with flowers in the corner and a bird over the centre. Then there was the eight-day dial bearing an eagle and the motto 'Tempus fugit,' or Mercury on a hemisphere. The next best quality dial had the seasons of the year in the four corners—spring represented by a shepherd or shepherdess; summer by hay-field scenes; autumn by sheep-shearing, harvesting, or sportsmen; and winter by a stick-laden labourer returning through a snowstorm to a cottage in the

distance. The arched dials of this quality had David playing before Saul, a pastoral scene, or Britannia with shield and trident, accompanied by a lion, the eyes of which in some cases moved. Finemore's *chef d'œuvre* depicted 'The Fall of Man,' Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Adam plucking an apple, while various birds and animals looked on from the surrounding foliage. This kind of dial has been made scarce in this country by the purchases of Americans. Other dials had ships passing to and fro, and moons which moved so as to give the rising and setting of that planet. The most remarkable dial that ever came under Mr Weight's notice was that of a relative named Lea—a miller and millwright between Malmesbury and Somerford. This represented a water-mill in full work, revolving glass tubes simulating the flow of water. At the mill-pond was a horse which went through the motions of drinking and moved its tail. Near at hand a man turned a grindstone at which another man ground an axe, and by the side two sawyers plied their calling. Adjacent was the village church, with a small clock which kept time with the large one; and in the background was a windmill with revolving arms. The clock also played twelve tunes. On another clock-dial were twelve blacksmiths who struck the hours upon an anvil. The introduction of cheap American clocks in 1849 knocked the 'grandfather' clock 'out of time,' and clocks are now mostly made in factories by men who are put on to section work, and could probably not turn out the entire article.

As already indicated, Americans are addicted to buying up the old 'grandfather' clocks. The possession of one does not prove that your fathers came over in the *Mayflower*, but it gives an air of respectable antiquity that does not suggest a passage in the steerage of a modern liner. One of Peyton's clocks, which belonged to Robert Raikes, still stands in the office of the *Gloucester Journal*, of which paper the Sunday-school pioneer was the proprietor. An American gentleman recently offered a fancy price for it; but though 'going, going'—and keeping very good time—the relic is not yet 'gone,' nor is it likely to change its present quarters.

LET THESE THINGS BE.

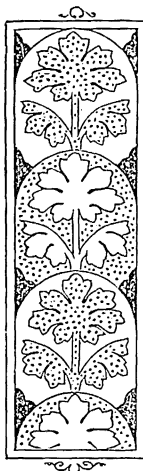
RONDEAU.

LET these things be, O Time! whate'er befall:
The memory of corn-fields by the sea,
The tender evening light shed over all—
Pale gold and gray—a sombre symphony,
And the weird music of the curlew's call.

Such sights and sounds as hold the soul in thrall—
That other scene of Spring-time's mystery,
The budding mays, fields pranked with lilies tall,
Let these things be!

So, through Life's darkened chambers I may see
These old sweet pictures dimly on the wall,
I shall not find the long, still evening pall.
Let these things be!

CONSTANCE FARMAR.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

BOGUS ANTIQUES.

THE passion for collecting antiques is now a widespread one. The number of old curiosity shops has, however, grown out of all proportion to the increase in the ranks of the buyers.

That so many of these shops should survive is astonishing, for the articles they sell are, at the best, desirable superfluities. The contents of the average old curiosity shop are, however, by no means desirable. The fact is, they do not depend for custom upon the true *virtuoso*. The man who studies his hobby is a scant source of profit. In the first place, he knows the real from the false; in the second, he will not pay exorbitant prices. It is the people who buy to be in the fashion who are the best customers. They fill their drawing-rooms with incongruous articles, which have often neither beauty, quaintness, nor historic associations to recommend them. Their antiquity even—to many a sufficient attraction—is often more than doubtful. Many were unquestionably made but the day before yesterday.

These people may be divided into two classes. First, there is the person who will not buy anything which is not highly priced. It is the only test he knows; he would disdain a masterpiece if it were to be had for a few shillings. Secondly, and inversely, there is the man who will not buy unless the article is ridiculously cheap. This man, the bargain-hunter, has the little knowledge which is so dangerous a thing anywhere, but especially in the old curiosity shop. He makes the fatal blunder of thinking that the dealer does not know his business. He believes that rarities are frequently to be bought for an old song. He mistakes the exception for the rule. Though he knows the value of the genuine article, he has not sufficient experience to distinguish it from the imitation. The less scrupulous type of dealer, a keen judge of human nature, recognises this class of dupe at sight. He prepares to play his part; his ignorance and obtuseness are admirably feigned. He will commit himself to nothing; he knows nothing. He has been told, he says, that the

article is very old or very rare. It was, he believes, in the possession of a certain family for a great many years, and they valued it highly. The bargain-hunter thereupon sees only a huckster, without knowledge or taste. He makes the purchase, and goes out of the shop with a look of ill-concealed satisfaction. He has got the best of it. The dealer is well satisfied too; he has sold a bogus antique for, perhaps, ten times what it cost him.

There are plenty of old curiosity shops where it would be difficult to find an article which is what it pretends to be. The persistent credulity of their customers must be a sore temptation even to honest dealers. Of old curiosity shops in general it may be fairly estimated that forty-five per cent. of the objects offered are spurious; expressly manufactured for sale, or 'faked' in some way. The ingenuity of the forger is unlimited. Furniture, prints, china, pictures, plate, armour, ivory, bronze, and tapestry—all are successfully imitated. 'Antique' armour and metal-work of all kinds are made in Birmingham. Spurious antique china comes from France, Holland, and Germany. The spurious print is perhaps the commonest trap of all. 'The craze of the coloured print' is just now with us, and the demand for examples of the celebrated engravers of the eighteenth century exceeds the supply a hundredfold. They are exceedingly scarce; consequently the market is flooded with reprints and reproductions. Several firms are engaged in producing them, and they cost the dealer in 'objects of art' from seven and sixpence to a pound apiece. Usually the paper is manipulated to give it the appearance of age, or the print is put into an old frame. It is certain that countless numbers of them are sold as originals. A reprint has this excuse, that, though subsequently 'touched' by a more modern hand, it is an impression taken from the original copper plate; but it cannot, of course, be compared with original prints from the graver of Bartolozzi, Ward, Schiavonetti, Valentine Green, Cipriani, or John Raphael Smith. A reprint, however, still contains some of the original lines. A reproduction is

merely a copy, every line of which, aided by photography, has been traced by a modern hand.

Most of the imitations of the antique are clumsy enough; though this is not always the case. The experts of our national museums have more than once been successfully imposed upon. The British Museum bought a Palissy plate for fifty pounds. Whilst an attendant was handling it one of the seals fixed to the back of the plate—attesting its genuineness—became detached, disclosing the mark of a modern French potter. Two terra-cotta figures of Isis and Osiris, bought for the same institution, and which cost a thousand pounds, have been discovered to be composed of modern clay. Antique china, a leading attraction of the old curiosity shops, is a fruitful source of fraud. From the extreme fragility of the material, even where intricacy of design or ornamentation was not superadded, the majority of the works of the early potters were doomed to speedy destruction. The forger is, as a rule, fortunately unable to reproduce the marvels of glaze, colouring, and decoration, of which in many cases the secret has been lost. Yet the windows of these shops are filled with spurious examples of Chelsea, Lowestoft, Dresden, Wedgwood, Worcester, Italian, or Limoges. Imitations even of the coarse Staffordshire figures of the Georgian and early Victorian period find a ready sale. Quite two-thirds of them are spurious, and are turned out by the gross from certain modern potteries. They are allowed to remain on the shelves of the curiosity shop until they have accumulated sufficient dirt and dust, the bottoms are rubbed upon some hard substance so that they will show signs of wear, and they are then ready for the first gullible purchaser.

There is scarcely any object of art which is not imitated to a greater or less degree. The speciality of one forger is old leather jacks, at ten shillings each; of another, horn-books at five shillings apiece. The price charged varies; but it may be set down at about a thousand per cent. profit on the cost. The writer not long since inspected a specimen of a 'mummy servant'—an effigy, in a plastic material, such as the Egyptians buried with their dead. A close examination proved it to be made of putty! It was the work of a very clever forger.

The trade in spurious works of art is by no means confined to this country. A writer in the *New York Herald* of January 22 and May 12, 1899, tells us that Rome, once the recognised centre of art, is now a huge emporium for forgeries. These are not only manufactured on the spot, but come from Paris, Munich, Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, and this country. 'Buy, for instance, if you are not an expert, a specimen of old Dresden or Capo di Monte porcelain. You will most probably be the possessor of a statuette or group manufactured in Paris or Munich, instead of an authentic piece from the palace of a Roman prince. . . .

'The statuettes and Egyptian scarabees, cameos and antique gems, Greek and foreign jewels of gold, the bronze or silver coins and moneys, the antique terra-cottas, weapons, Florentine Renaissance marbles, Tanagra figures and the fine figures from Asia Minor—all these interesting antiquities are the work of skilful contemporary workmen, very often excellent artists, capable of creating works of their own if they only had a little encouragement from those whom they cheat for the benefit of unscrupulous dealers. . . .

'To-day artistic Rome is invaded by wealthy and powerful syndicates of dealers in statues and pictures, in league with guides and couriers, and with copyists often fraudulent. The audacity of some of these cheats, who keep shops largely advertised, has known no limits. When dealing with the foreigner, who is often too confiding, they sell false antiquities as guaranteed originals, which are mere copies from the masters. This trickery is practised at the expense of artists of talent. A foreign sculptor recently caused to be seized a dozen reproductions of models stolen from his studios during his absence from Rome; and an artist of great talent, recently returned from the United States, had seen arrive at one of the largest museums packing-cases containing antiquities purchased in Rome at enormous prices. These were such gross imitations that the curator of the museum refused them admittance into the department reserved for antiquities.'

Referring to this same subject of forging antiquities in Italy, some interesting details are given in the twelfth chapter of a small work recently translated into English (*Memories of an Old Collector*: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1898). The author, Count Michael Tyskiewicz, a noted collector and judge of antiques, tells us that from earliest times men have been occupied in forging antiquities, and that no metal lends itself so easily to forgery as gold. Etruscan jewellery has been largely manufactured in Italy; but in Syria the forgery of gold works of art is most extensive. Forgers have also attempted to manufacture ancient silver plate, but their efforts have been very unsuccessful. The Count tells an amusing story of 'a great silver cup in Rome that purported to have come from some secret excavations in Sicily. It was ornamented with a circular bas-relief representing—Could any one believe such a thing?—the frieze of the Parthenon! In the height of his innocence the forger had given the frieze in its present ruined condition. The cup obtained an immediate success—of shouts of laughter!'

Moved by the numerous complaints and claims of visitors, and the absence of special laws against forgery in Italy, an association has been formed to put an end, if possible, to this state of things. It consists of artists, dilettanti, collectors, and conscientious dealers who have long protested in vain. In the interests of the travelling public we wish their praiseworthy efforts every success.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER II.—THE OPEN DOOR.



WHEN my senses woke, slowly and not too clearly, 'twas to the consciousness of a very different scene.

At first, indeed, my only feeling was one of overpowering weakness.

My wits were still befogged, and I had no curiosity. Gradually a pleasing sense of ease and warmth crept over me, and caused a vague wonder; then, all at once, the fog lifted to the memory of my misadventure; and therewith came the knowledge that I was not lying on the frozen, moonlit road, but on a couch in a well-warmed room—and also the knowledge, as I turned upon my side, of a sharp pang in my wounded shoulder. Even in my new position, however, I could see nothing save a small square table upon which a single candle burned. It held likewise a bottle and glass and some strips of linen, and the firelight was reflected from its polished sides.

Presently I strove to raise myself upon the couch; but so great was the agony that, against my will, a cry escaped me. It brought no response. Plainly, I was alone in the room.

For a time I lay still, contenting myself with vague speculations. Where I was, what had happened subsequent to my fall—these were points to which I could find no answer, and I might have troubled my mazed brain with them longer (and to the same purpose) but for a noise that suddenly smote my ears. Beyond doubt 'twas the sound of men's voices, mingled with laughter and the clink of glasses; and although it lasted scarce a moment—for such a space, say, as might suffice for the opening and shutting of a door—it served to rouse me to action. I felt that the question of my whereabouts must be resolved inconspicuously.

So, clenching my teeth, I managed to struggle to a sitting posture. The effort left me dizzy and sick with pain; but after a minute I was able to look about me. I learned little; the couch and table, set in front of a glowing fire, were cut off from the rest of the room by a screen. For myself, I was swathed in blankets; and, throwing them off, I found that I had been stripped of coat and waistcoat, and that their place was taken by a light wrap tied round my shoulders.

My next step was to pass the screen, and in my state of weakness this was a task of infinite difficulty. At length, somehow, I did so. Beyond, the room was almost in darkness. But the door was slightly ajar, and here a narrow shaft of light struck against the wainscoting of the wall. This light seemed to draw me; I had eyes for it alone, yet hesitated to advance; and, while I halted irresolute, another burst of sound came to

me from without. Before it had died away my determination was fixed.

Slowly and most carefully, resting often to steady my swimming head, I felt my way along the wall to the door. Reaching it, I stopped to listen. Now I heard only a low hum as of a single voice—that and nought else. So I made haste to pull the door open, and glanced out into a passage dimly lit by a lamp upon a bracket. There were several other doors, all closed, and opposite mine a staircase descended. Still there was no sound save the low hum, and presently it too had ceased. I waited while one might count a score; then, moved by the dead silence, I stepped across the passage to the stairhead. And as I leaned against the banister and looked over, this is what I saw:

On the other side of the little hall below, a wide-open door showed me a well-furnished, well-lit room and a table covered with bottles and glasses; a group of men standing together, as if they had just risen from their wine; and, a pace or two within the door, another man who stood apart, with his back towards me and his face to the others. These were four or five in number; and, if the fashion of their dress and their air did not belie them, they were people of some quality. For the moment, their whole attention seemed to be claimed by their companion at the door. He, in turn, was a man of good height and figure, albeit with a slight stoop of the shoulders that hinted of middle age; he was heavily cloaked, and was the only person in the room wearing a hat.

So much had I grasped, when the cloaked gentleman spoke. The tones were low, but so clear that I missed not a word.

'I thank you again, gentlemen,' said he. 'But I assure you it is needless. My good host is escort enough.'

Apparently this was taken as the final answer to some request; for his companions bowed deep, as to the command of a superior. Then ensued a strange scene. One by one the men came forward, each with an air of profound deference that (surprising as it was) could not be mistaken. In the ear of each a few words were whispered; each bent low, and *kissed the hand of the cloaked one!* I could perceive their faces as they fell back in succession—there was not one that was without some trace of emotion. But here followed the most significant incident of all. Suddenly five swords were drawn as one and brandished, while their wearers (I was assured in my own mind) would instantly have given voice to some cry had not a raised arm restrained them.

'Not here, gentlemen!' I heard. 'You know

my wishes. So—not now, if you would please me!’

My brain was whirling once more. I could scarce believe the testimony of my eyes, nor (above all) could I imagine what all this portended—the marked and unwonted respect of these gentlemen, the dignity with which it was received, the solemnity of the whole ceremony. Meaning it must have—such regard was not paid without cause. I had an overmastering anxiety to behold the face of the mysterious personage who had thus called it forth.

The swords had been sheathed at his word, and now he spoke again.

‘It must be farewell, my friends—for the present,’ said he. ‘Or, let us rather hope, *au revoir*. But first, Sir Charles’—

He turned half-round, and in a second my desire would have been fulfilled. But Fortune willed it otherwise. In that second a touch fell on my unwounded shoulder, and I wheeled with a start—to see at my elbow a maiden of perhaps twenty years, and to hear her voice. I had been too intent on that which was passing beneath to notice her approach.

‘Are you mad, sir—after such an accident?’ she said, almost in a whisper. ‘Come, you must return to your room at once!’

The tones were those of gentle breeding yet of sufficient authority. But I did not move—I could not. I was held perforce by her rare and winning beauty. Here I may not describe her, and at the time, in truth, I saw little more than the womanly pity in her wistful, eloquent eyes. Luckily I realised not the sorry figure that I myself must have cut.

‘Surely they did not leave you alone?’ she asked after a moment. ‘But you must not stay here. Come!’

She laid her hand on my arm, and somehow, curiously, I had no resistance to offer, but permitted her to lead me back to my room; and just as we entered it this cry rose from the hall:

‘Kitty! Kitty!’

Saying not a word, she directed my steps towards the couch, and had done so as far as the screen, when, without warning, the effect of my late efforts overtook me. I felt my strength going, and clutched wildly at the screen; and doubtless it would have fallen with me had I not been caught by these ready hands and deftly guided to my old place. The last that I recollected was a repetition of the call:

‘Kitty! Kitty!’

I was in bed in another room when I came to myself again. I was conscious of a faint perfume as of lavender; my head seemed clearer; and, strangely enough, my earliest thoughts were of my adventure on the Bath road and the polite highwayman. Then I was aware of voices.

‘Is he better?’ asked one.

‘Oh, he’ll do famously now,’ said another. ‘But he is lucky—the least thing lower and ’twould have been through his lung. As it is, he has lost a deal of blood.’

‘Poor young gentleman!’

‘He is young enough to be able to spare it. A day or two—and your nursing—will bring him round.’

At first it did not strike me that it was of myself they were speaking, until an arm was slipped beneath me, and I was propped against the pillows.

‘Now, Mrs Herbert, the glass—quick, if you please.’

Opening my eyes, I saw that two persons were by the bedside, a man and a woman—she a gentle-faced, elderly lady in a marvellous cap, and he a clean-shaven man of middle age, quietly garbed in black, yet with an air that (even at a first glance) was unmistakably military. He it was who had spoken, and was now regarding me with kindly, alert eyes.

‘Where am I?’ I asked.

‘So you’ve come to!’ said he cheerfully. ‘Gently, sir! You must not move; your wound has just been dressed. Rest assured you are in good hands.’

‘You are the surgeon?’

‘I am yours, for want of a better. . . . Now, drink this and go to sleep. You will be more fit for talk in the morning.’

‘But—the highwayman?’ I persisted, still groping in the dark.

‘The highwayman? Oh, I’ll warrant he’s in safety long ago. But come, sir!’ he cried, holding the glass to my lips, ‘you must drink off your medicine.’

That, at least, was not difficult of accomplishment; for the medicine (so-called) had a delectable smack of old sherry; and presently it had its proper effect, and with a sense of the utmost rest and comfort I slipped into the oblivion of sleep.

But this was only at first. After a time my slumber was broken by a disturbing medley of dream-images—or so they seemed to me. My host, and the highwayman, and the party which I had overseen, all changed places in these feverish visions with an amazing inconsequence. Now it was my host who knelt beside me on the broad stretch of the Bath road, and I had no fear. Again I was in bed, and ’twas the masked pad who bent over me, and with mocking laughter held his point to my throat; and thereat I could have called out in terror, and mayhap did so. Other scenes there were; but ever and always, at the moment of danger, the face of a girl interposed, and the hateful phantoms were routed. Need I say whose face it was? Afterwards I could recollect every feature and expression; and all night it rose between me and my terrors like the face of an angel, and in the morning the im-

pression was still so vivid that, waking, I half-hoped to see it before me. But the only face that I saw was the placid, motherly countenance of the old gentlewoman, Mrs Herbert.

She was standing by the little window, looking out. A frosty ray of sunshine straggled through, but was no rival to the warmer light that gleamed from the fire and was reflected from the dark oak wainscoting of the chamber.

For a little I left her undisturbed, and lay quiet, idly recalling the events that (as far as they were known to me) had followed my encounter. That, to be sure, was vivid enough in my memory; but so shadowy and confused were my later recollections that, just then, I could scarce decide how much was real and how much was the fruit of uneasy dreams. But these considerations were soon driven forth by one more clamant. I remembered my mission, and its urgent importance; and while the doubt as to what had befallen Joseph—whether he had escaped scot-free and fulfilled his errand, or whether his pursuer had overhauled him—remained unsettled, I had a duty that permitted no rest. So:

‘Good-morning, madam,’ said I.

Mrs Herbert, returning the greeting, approached the bed. ‘You have had a restless night, but I hope you feel better,’ said she.

‘So much so,’ I replied, ‘that I am thinking of rising.’

‘As to that, sir, you must see Mr Morell. Just now I will get some breakfast for you.’

‘First you will tell me where I am?’ I pleaded as she turned to go.

‘This is the Dower-house of Langbridge Hall.’

‘And how did I come here?’

‘Mr Morell found you lying wounded on the road. He was riding home from Devizes with a friend—Mr Kennett of Langbridge—when they saw you, and brought you here as being the nearest house. Now, if you will allow me, sir,’ she said, ‘I will tell him you are awakened.’

She went off in some haste, but came back presently with a tray containing such dainty viands as might tempt an invalid; to which I was able, to my gratification, to do full justice. I was barely done with the repast, and feeling all the stronger for it, when my host appeared. I would have thanked him for his great courtesy, but he refused to listen to a single word until my wound was examined. In the interval I had good opportunity to study him, and, as the result, was confirmed in my over-night estimate; there could be no doubt of his quality, nor that he had seen service. In other respects I had a curious, vague idea that he was (or should have been) not altogether unknown to me, yet for my life I could not trace the notion.

At length his task was finished.

‘There! that’s right,’ he cried. ‘It is healing beautifully, sir; you will be out of bed to-morrow,

and in three days will be ready for the saddle again.’

‘Three days!’ I repeated, aghast. ‘But I must be riding to-day!’

‘Neither to-day nor to-morrow,’ said he. ‘Why, ’tis utterly impossible! There was snow in the night, and it threatens more; and, to be frank, ’twould mean your death.’

‘Still, I must go. There is my duty’—

‘And there is mine as your surgeon, which is to keep you here. Be sensible, man!’ Smiling: ‘At the worst, you don’t propose to ride without your small-clothes?’

In truth, as a glance assured me, my garments had been removed; and, notwithstanding my impatience and chagrin, I could not resist an answering smile at his little conceit. Yet he seemed to read my thoughts.

‘Come, let us make a bargain,’ he continued. ‘The clothes will be restored in due time—say at noon—if you will promise me to rest content so long. After that you must decide for yourself. Honestly, you will be none the worse for a few more hours’ sleep.’

‘But I could not sleep when’—

‘Oh! I have a magical elixir that will ensure it. Now, what is it to be?’

He had the whip-hand, and I must needs accept; and, besides, his manner was so brisk and friendly, and my debt to him so great, that ’twould have been churlish to stand out. So I gave in—handsomely, I hope—and even tried to find words for the proper acknowledgment of his rescue of me on the Bath road. But there he cut me short.

‘’Twas only what any gentleman would have done,’ said he. ‘Think no more of it, I pray you. But I should like to hear, if it would not weary you, how you came to be in such a pass.’

I told the story as briefly as might be, hiding nothing save the nature of my mission. He listened without interruption.

‘Just as I thought,’ he cried. ‘The pad was Craddock, beyond a doubt—Squire Craddock they call him hereabouts, because of his grand manner and some tradition of gentle birth. You would know him again?’

‘I am sure of it,’ I returned. ‘He was masked, of course; but I could not mistake his figure and voice.’

‘Ah!—After all,’ he went on, ‘he is a bold rogue, and I have a fancy to meet him. What do you say, sir, to a hunt after him together when your shoulder is better? A turn with such a swordsman would be a pleasure! . . . And your servant escaped?’

‘That is what I must learn as soon as possible. Much depends upon it.’

‘So? Well, for our part, we must have disturbed him at work—my neighbour, Mr Kennett, was with me. Indeed, we heard his horse’s hoofs

in the distance as we came up. Doubtless 'twas the sound of ours that alarmed him. But I am sorry to tell you he had found time to clear you out most effectually. I took the liberty of searching your clothes later on, and your pocket-book, watch and seals, all your valuables, were gone—everything except your sword, which my friend picked up on the road.'

Even that was something, for the rapier had belonged to my grandfather; and for the rest, having expected it, I cared little if only the papers in Joseph's charge were safe. In any case, my trinkets were of small account in comparison with my life. 'And that, sir, I owe to you,' I said. 'But for your charity, the frost must soon have completed Craddock's work.'

He shook his head. 'Now, I am not so certain,' said he. 'The man has some good; your wound was roughly bandaged, and why should he have done that had he intended you to freeze? You were unconscious—probably he would have made means to get you to an inn or somewhere. Not that the half-mile hence that we brought you across my saddle was too little! And so you are here,' he said; 'and here, at your pleasure, is another draught of your medicine. Drink it—and sleep!'

I did both, the latter almost instantly; for truly the stuff, whatever its ingredients were, seemed to have a wonderful potency. It was fully an hour past midday when I was awakened by Mrs Herbert. Dinner was by my bedside, and there also my clothes were laid out, with clean linen—my coat brushed and neatly darned, and everything in readiness. I felt a new man, and my appetite did not belie the feeling, much to the pleasure of the good lady who attended to me.

'Mr Morell will be up presently,' she said as she retired.

But I was too impatient to wait. I rose at once, made shift to begin my toilet without assistance, and, in spite of sundry difficulties, had nearly completed it, when my host entered.

Rallying me on my haste, he helped me to add the last touches. Then he opened the door for me.

'Now, if you are ready'—

'Thank you. But I'm afraid I must walk slowly. My legs are still somewhat unsteady, I find.'

'Quite naturally. If you will take my arm—so!'

We passed out as he spoke, and then I pulled up with a start; for we stood upon the landing from which, on the previous evening, I had witnessed such a remarkable scene. The whole incident recurred to my mind in a flash, and I knew that it had been no dream.

'Don't fear to lean upon me,' continued my host, misapprehending my action. 'The weakness will soon go.'

So we descended the stair, thoughtfully on my part, on his with a flow of advice and encouragement. At the bottom, in the hall, he stopped and said:

'By the way—you will pardon my remissness, sir—but I do not think I have your name.'

'The blame is mine,' I replied, and gave it.

He turned to me, as if in surprise. 'Not of the Holroyds of the West Riding, surely?'

'My father is Bevil Holroyd of Dunsyre.'

'What!' he cried. 'Bevil Holroyd, my old schoolfellow and companion! It can't be!' Then he broke into merry laughter. 'Why, this is famous! But come, Mr Holroyd.'

He threw open a door, and from the fireside of a small, cosy room two ladies rose to greet us. One was Mrs Herbert; the other was she whom I had met on the stair-head—and the maiden of my visions. There was a pleasing tinge of red in her cheeks as she came forward.

'My dear, I have a surprise for you,' cried my host. To me: 'Sir, this is my daughter Kitty.—Kitty, let me present to you—your cousin, George Holroyd!'

And again he laughed heartily.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.



WHEN you have been taking things fairly comfortably, confident that all was going on very well, or at least that there was nothing to worry about, and at last discover that you have been living in a sort of fool's paradise, you feel somewhat mortified and crestfallen. In any case, the discovery will have a wholesome effect; and if matters have not gone too far the bitterness soon yields to a feeling of thankfulness at having one's eyes opened in time. Many persons who have John Bull's welfare at heart have for some time past been trying to make him realise that an inconspicuous

but essential part of his domestic arrangements is seriously out of order, and is daily getting worse. At length they have gained the good man's ear. They are assuring him that, while he has made some provision for the education of his poorer dependents, the others have been left to shift for themselves; in this scramble a few come off well, but many fare badly; the process is costly and wasteful, and so faulty and ineffective that, in this age of increasing competition, even an old commercial house such as his *must* meet with disaster unless this serious defect is made thoroughly good without further delay.

John admits that his trade is not growing,

while that of some of his rivals with fewer natural advantages is increasing by leaps and bounds. He admits there may be something amiss—something possibly within his control. But for a long time he has been doing very well on the whole—much better, indeed, than most other firms. Still, these foreigners are undoubtedly taking away some of his trade. He resolves at last, therefore, to make full inquiries of his agents abroad as to the alleged facts and their causes, and is told practically the same tale by all of them—namely, that the allegations as to trade are true, and that the causes are that at home the old firm is too slow in taking up new ideas and in improving old methods, and does not sufficiently study its customers' varied requirements abroad; in fact, that, through its insularity and its conservatism, the old firm is being beaten by houses that put more brains into their work. The old man can hold out no longer. He consults his friends, therefore, as to the education of his agents, managers, clerks, and other brain-workers whose mental alertness and attainments are impugned, and they report to him as follows.

THE VARIOUS KINDS OF SCHOOLS.

A secondary school is one in which many, usually most, of the pupils are receiving an education higher than that given in the ordinary primary or public elementary school. It is in schools of this class that the great majority of our manufacturers, merchants, managers, commercial travellers, clerks, engineers, electricians, chemists, farmers, and professional classes are educated. While uniformity is the characteristic of the primary schools, variety does and must prevail among schools producing such diverse products as the above. A future engineer requires an education which might not suit a future solicitor or a city clerk. It will be best to glance briefly at the leading types of secondary schools. First, we may note a few wealthy old schools like Eton and Harrow—'non-local' we might term them—whose connection with commerce is so indirect that we can disregard them here. It is the second class, coming below these, that claims our attention. They comprise a great variety—the old grammar-schools, large and small; the modern 'Foundation' school of our towns, the fruit of ancient endowments for charitable or for educational purposes, rendered available for secondary education by the State's provision of free primary education; the 'company's' school, provided by the wealthy city company, or by a church-schools company, or by a girls' public school company; the proprietary school, the property of a body of shareholders who hold the right of nominating boys for admission to the school; and the numerous private schools. Examples of most of these will readily occur to readers of this *Journal*. It would be hard to say in what these schools are alike, except that the standard of attainment reached is usually in advance of that of the primary school. They vary

in their form of control, in their financial arrangements, in the subject or subjects emphasised, in the age and social status of their pupils, in their aim, and so on. Their peculiar feature is their individuality: each school stands by itself, is a law to itself, is judged by itself. With few exceptions it is not adjusted with reference either to the primary schools below it, other secondary schools about it, or to the local industries. Indeed, so many different interests and callings are represented in a secondary school, especially if it is the only one in the district, that, except for the highest classes of a good school, a *general* education seems the only course available, as it is undoubtedly the best.

THE SUPPLY OF SCHOOLS.

The number of schools is doubtless equal to the demand for places. This is easily explained. The country districts and the older towns are fairly well supplied with the old endowed grammar-schools; new districts possess many of the other public schools mentioned above. But where these are wanting, and even close beside them, private schools are found. Indeed, the latter schools have done good service to the community: they often prove more congenial to a delicate boy than the public school, and they adapt themselves to the needs of their *clientèle* in a way the endowed school refuses to do. They serve as the training-ground for very many of the teachers in the public schools, and they have supplied many districts with the only secondary schools they possess. There is always a considerable number of assistant-masters and mistresses, or of other less qualified but enterprising persons, keeping a sharp lookout for any opening for a private school; partly from a desire to become one's own master, partly from the insecurity of an assistant's tenure in most public schools. And in a good district, where fairly high fees can be obtained and there is no endowed school to compete with, a private school may do tolerably well—both for pupils and teachers. But when a district deteriorates, or an endowed school is established at low fees, or a higher grade school at moderate fees, the private school is doomed to painful extinction. This process is now taking place in many districts. The impecunious public school is in much the same position. Its endowment, perhaps, has declined through agricultural depression; the railways now take away to distant schools the pupils of its richer patrons; the free Board school satisfies the poorer pupils; and possibly the more enterprising parents find in a neighbouring town a newer school, equipped with all modern improvements, well staffed, well graded, complete in every respect. Hence the master of the poor grammar-school finds his position a very anxious, possibly a ruinous one, for frequently enough he 'farms' his school, taking all and paying all. But the latter school usually has buildings of its own

and some endowment, however small; and being a 'public' school—that is, under the control of a body of governors—it has this advantage over the private school, that it is eligible to earn and receive grants of money from the Science and Art Department and the County Council. A private institution, however good, is refused all recognition by the State. Now, if it be borne in mind that hundreds of our secondary schools are small country grammar-schools, having small endowments, and unable to charge more than a moderate fee, depending largely on the supply of boarders, it will be seen how great is the temptation to go in for the business of earning 'grants,' by giving instruction in science subjects, to the neglect of the other work.

Fostered by these grants from the Science and Art Department, the teaching of science has developed enormously in the poorer schools during the last ten or fifteen years. The literary side of education, to which more value used to be attached, has suffered; the schools, as a means of training character, have suffered; nor does it appear that there is an equivalent gain. The change was made, not because it suited a particular district, but simply and solely because it 'paid'! Presumably to meet the allegation that non-science work was being crushed out, the Science and Art Department now recognises and inspects a school as a whole, taking account of all its work, provided it devotes a certain number of hours per week to certain subjects—science, mathematics, drawing, and manual work. The grant is assessed on the general character of the work. This is the 'School of Science.' Probably the arrangement was made for the special benefit of poor schools in manufacturing districts; but, of course, the poverty of other schools where a scientific course was not needed drove them to accept the scheme. The small, poor schools in country districts, however, cannot avail themselves of this help: they must look to the County Council, which, under the Technical Instruction and other Acts, may assist schools out of its share of the 'whisky money,' and may levy a special rate for this purpose, though it seldom or never does so. This assistance usually takes the form of an annual grant for or towards the payment of a master for science or drawing, or a grant for buildings or fittings. As a condition it claims a voice in the control of the school. Many small schools receive a little help in this way, but not enough to enable them to pay well-qualified teachers. Large schools get substantial help from the same source, at the same time that they may be earning other grants as mentioned above. Thus, while a large school, by sacrificing its curriculum to science, may benefit to the extent of seven or eight hundred pounds a year, the small, poor school is left to make the most of its 'salubrious situation' and the 'unlimited diet' provided for boarders. Well-endowed schools are free from this ignoble and

degrading struggle for the means to carry on their work; they are free to adopt the most suitable curriculum without restriction; they can afford to pay highly-qualified teachers, to give them small classes, and to provide the necessary appliances; they can offer them fair salaries and a pension: in short, the well-endowed schools, and they alone, can carry on the business of secondary education in an efficient manner.

Mr Bryce, M.P., lately ventilated his opinion as to the prevailing tendency to substitute physical science for literary and humane subjects, which he thought had gone too far, and was becoming a serious danger to the future education of the people; 'for,' said he, 'the substitution of a scientific education for the teaching which had led to the highest thoughts and ideas of mankind would produce a hard, dry, gritty, unfertile type of mind, as compared with the results which literary studies ought to produce.'

TEACHERS' PENSIONS AND SALARIES.

I have gone into some detail on this part of the subject because it lies at the root of all reform and reorganisation. Secondary education cannot be done on the cheap if it is to be well done. Given land, premises, and fittings all in working order, the cost per pupil cannot be reduced below eleven or twelve pounds a year—except at the sacrifice of efficiency. For there is one costly peculiarity to bear in mind here—namely, that teaching, when a man puts his heart into it (and without that it is a sorry thing), is exceptionally wearing work. In spite of apparently short hours—*school* hours are not long—and quite exceptional holidays, the dominie, in a town school at least, has lost much of his buoyancy and vivacity and energy at fifty-five. He is getting out of touch with the active young spirits he ought to guide and lead. 'Crabbed age and youth cannot live together.' The schoolmaster's work never becomes one of routine, never tends in the slightest degree to do so, and never can so tend, simply because the material with which he has to deal is composed of individual units of which no two are alike; and no sooner has he managed to acquire some knowledge of the dispositions and abilities of one set of pupils than he loses them and has to begin again with another. No matter how long a teacher remains at his work, it never becomes appreciably easier. In a pension scheme for assistant masters recently established by the Incorporated Association of Head-Masters in England, fifty-five is the pension age adopted. It would thus appear that in the case of teachers exceptionally liberal pension arrangements must be made unless we are willing to see them retained in schools after they have ceased to be efficient; and that this applies specially to the case of town schools, where the classes are large. It should be borne in mind in this connection that it is the hardest workers who break down soonest. The Superannuation Act for primary teachers

passed last session fixes the pension age at sixty-five; but possibly this is a temporary arrangement.

Now as to the salaries paid in secondary schools. Those of the head-teachers in large town schools are good; in the country they depend largely on what is not school work at all—namely, the management of a boarding-house. So important is this element that I have known of a hotel-keeper who was at the same time proprietor of two (private) boarding-schools, the minor department of the business, of course, being left to a paid head-master! As to assistant-teachers, they are, except in the case of comparatively few schools, paid very badly, whether compared with head-teachers or with educated people in other walks of life. It might be more correct to say the salaries are very low, the well-qualified teachers being greatly underpaid; the many of mediocre qualifications probably earning as much here as they would anywhere else. I could furnish some interesting but painful figures on this vital point—for it undoubtedly is the vital point in the whole question of secondary education. We may make grants and build palatial premises; we may co-ordinate our schools and prevent overlapping and undue competition; we may draw up syllabuses and compile curricula for various types of schools. But it will all be as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals unless we realise that these are but the husk and not the kernel, the house and not the home, the body only, not the spirit. *A school is made by its teachers, and by them only.* Good books and apparatus being taken for granted, nothing else is really necessary besides scholars and teachers. In our desire to show what we are doing, or to satisfy the unthinking, or to dignify the work, we erect a palace and call it a school. Formerly it was called a school-house. What a world of mischief may be wrought by a word! Is it not the popular notion that when you have got your handsome building the thing in the main is done? As for the teaching, why, anybody can do that. For the wages of a mechanic you can get a Master of Arts; a German or a French master for those of a house-painter! The thing is simple enough, it would seem. But how can we secure an efficient teacher? As the best schools do now—that is, by offering a fairly liberal salary. Having got him, how can we secure his devotion to the school? Identify him with it; make his life's interest centre in it; make him, in his sphere, as zealous as if he were the head; make him give, not so many hours per day, measured on the clock, but himself—his best energies, his best thought, his active endeavours for the real good of every boy entrusted to his care, recorded in the characters and lives of the hundreds of grateful men who shall have passed under his care.

How can this be done? As it is done in the best schools now—namely, by assuring a man of the

security of his position so long as his work is good; by periodical increases of salary according to his efficiency and zeal: the first will make a teacher feel at home, settled, recognised, appreciated—it will bring out the best in the man; the second will secure the school his constant interest and all his teaching energy. So long as a man feels that he is grossly underpaid, and that good work cannot avail to secure him in his position, the man is working, so to speak, at low pressure. He does not respect an office which is rated so lightly. He has to eke out a livelihood by taking clerical work, by taking evening classes, by private teaching, and so on. This, of course, is bad for the school. On considering these things one can hardly be surprised at the prevalence among assistant-masters—ladies are more enthusiastic—of a peculiar apathy and want of interest with regard to their work; nor at the small proportion of graduates in secondary schools—public schools as well as private. One remedy for the latter evil has been suggested in the form of a register of teachers qualified to teach in secondary schools, so that parents may know 'who's who.' What care parents about the teachers' qualifications if the school passes among their circle as a good school? In choosing a doctor, who inquires about his diplomas? All doctors, practically, are qualified. Are they all good doctors? There is only one way to obtain good and well-qualified teachers, and that is to offer a sufficient inducement.

THE INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.

What assurance have we that a school is doing its duty by our children? None whatever. True, when the child is about thirteen or fourteen he may be entered for some outside independent examination, such as the Oxford or Cambridge Locals, by way of test, if the school course corresponds thereto. But such a method is not feasible. And, moreover, discovery would come too late. The only safe plan at present is to have the pupil tested periodically, which is tantamount to saying that a thorough, complete, independent, and impartial inspection—sanitary as well as educational—ought to be compulsory on every school in the land. We are compelled by the law to send our children to school; we are therefore entitled to demand that Government shall make schools efficient, or close them. But thorough inspection means more than an annual visit; it must be kept up throughout the year. A good school will welcome inspection; a bad school cannot have too much of it. Scholarship is not the chief requisite in an inspector. What is essential is to have had considerable experience in teaching in these schools, and to be perfectly familiar with every question involved in the working of a school. Would a professor of the abstract principles of mechanics make a competent inspector of the complicated engines and machinery in our men-of-war? In our primary schools inspection is

admitted to be essential. Is human nature different in secondary schools?

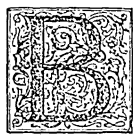
CONCLUSION: OUR NEEDS.

To adapt our schools to our needs as an industrial and commercial nation, we want (1) the means to pay well-qualified teachers; (2) Government inspection, educational and sanitary, of every school; (3) local authorities over large areas to

(a) prevent wasteful competition, (b) settle the aims and curricula of schools with reference to the needs of the district, and (c) appoint head and visiting-teachers; (4) a strong central authority, controlling and harmonising primary, secondary, and technical education through the local authorities, and appointing inspectors; and (5) as a basis, a supply of preparatory schools for children of seven to nine.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER II.



BEFORE long I awoke to the fact that both windows of my compartment were open, and that the evening had turned unaccountably cold. My fur-lined overcoat was lying where I had placed it when I took it off; and having arranged the windows to my liking, I proceeded to put it on. While in the act of buttoning it, a slight protuberance of the breast-pocket attracted my attention. Inserting my hand into the pocket, I drew from it a long, narrow envelope, fastened in the usual way, the contents of which seemed to consist of one or more documents, and which certainly was no property of mine. I stared at it for some moments in a maze of perplexity. Why had the packet been put there? To whom did it belong? Then, perceiving that there was something written on it in pencil, with the help of my *pince-nez* I managed to decipher the following words, here translated, which had evidently been scrawled in a great hurry:

‘Mr Simkinson is earnestly entreated to deliver the enclosed papers unread to’—

That was all.

And then in a flash everything became clear to me. The packet had been put where I had found it by Mdlle. Dufarge during my absence from the carriage. Something had led her to suspect that she was about to be arrested, and rather than allow the papers to fall into the hands of the police, she had determined, on the spur of the moment, to entrust them to me for delivery, but had not had time to write either the name or address of the person for whom they were intended. That was indeed unfortunate. I would gladly have obliged Mdlle. Dufarge—for whose arrest I was sincerely sorry—so far as it lay in my power to do so; but, in lack of the requisite information, I was altogether helpless in the affair. I turned the envelope over and over, but there was no other scrap of writing on it.

What was to be done?

In the papers themselves something would most likely be found which would furnish a clue to the missing information, but in face of the request that the envelope should be delivered in-

tact, I not unnaturally shrank from opening it. Still, I must either disregard the injunction or be saddled, willy-nilly, with a batch of documents of undoubted importance to somebody, which would never otherwise reach the person for whom they were intended. Of the two courses open to me which was the more advisable one to take?

For some minutes I sat in a brown study, debating the question this way and that. At length I ended the matter by taking my pen-knife, slitting open the envelope, and extracting the contents.

These proved to consist of three separate documents, apparently written by different persons. Although couched in what to me was to a certain extent enigmatic language, there could be little doubt, from the point of view of the powers that were, as to their treasonable tendency. But the sole point which concerned me was that in none of them could I find any trace of an address at which to deliver them; while, in place of proper names, initials only were given. It was a most embarrassing position in which to find one's self, and I wished most heartily that Mdlle. Dufarge had found another messenger.

We were now approaching Abbeville, so I crammed the confounded things back into my pocket, and buttoned my coat over them.

At Abbeville my compartment was invaded by a stout, elderly, genial-looking Frenchman, who, with his tightly-buttoned frock-coat, his carefully waxed moustache, and gold-rimmed spectacles, had the appearance of a man of substance and standing.

The stranger seemed of a talkative disposition, and before many minutes were over we were in the midst of an animated conversation. I hardly know what impelled me to do so, but after a time I told him about the Amiens incident in connection with Mdlle. Dufarge. I was, however, careful to make no mention of the mysterious packet of papers. My companion listened attentively, but when I had come to an end he merely shrugged his shoulders and said, ‘Persons who are so foolish as to risk their liberty in an attempt to subvert the government must pay the penalty of their rashness;’ and

therewith he turned the conversation into another channel.

By-and-by I offered him my card—my business one, I mean—for I never miss an opportunity of pushing the firm's sparkling bottled ales. He returned the compliment by proffering me his own pasteboard, on which, however, was merely inscribed the words, 'M. Legard, Abbeville.' He was going through to London, he gave me to understand, where he had a sister who was lying dangerously ill: At Boulogne we shook hands and parted. I had some customers to call upon both there and at Calais, and would not be able to cross before the afternoon boat next day.

It had been dark some time, and was raining fast when I reached the Charing Cross terminus by the seven thirty-five boat train the following evening. Hardly had I set foot on the platform before I felt a tap on my shoulder, and on turning found myself, immensely to my surprise, face to face with M. Legard. He proffered his hand as an old acquaintance might have done, and greeted me effusively. He had been waiting purposely for me, he went on to observe, in the hope that I should arrive by the evening train (I had mentioned incidentally the day before that Charing Cross Station was the one nearest my home), adding that he had every reason for believing he had secured for me what would prove to be a very valuable order for export bottled ales.

On hearing this I did not fail to prick up my ears, neither time nor place mattering a jot to me so long as I can do a profitable stroke of business. Only, M. Legard proceeded to remark, I must go with him at once and be introduced to his friend if I wished to secure the order, as the latter was due to leave London at six o'clock next morning, and would not be back for some time to come.

Having thanked M. Legard for the trouble he had taken on my behalf, I intimated my willingness to accompany him as soon as I had deposited my portmanteau in the cloak-room. A few minutes later the Frenchman and I were rattling through the streets in a four-wheeler.

I took little or no heed of the way we were going; indeed, so smeared were the cab windows with the heavy rain that everything seen through them looked blurred and unfamiliar; besides which, my attention was pretty well taken up by my companion's animated flow of talk, which politeness demanded that I should not altogether ignore. However, our ride did not last much longer than a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time the cab drew up with a jerk.

The Frenchman was the first to alight, and while I was following his example he ran nimbly up a short flight of steps and knocked what might be termed a double postman's knock on the door opposite which we had drawn up. Hardly had his fingers left the knocker before the door was opened from the inside, as if by some mechanical agency, no one being visible. I had followed Legard up the steps, and he now turned to me. '*Entrez, s'il vous plait, monsieur*,' he said as he stood aside to let me pass. I at once complied, and he followed close on my heels, and shut the door behind us. A moment later I heard the cab drive away. Evidently the driver had been paid his fare in advance.

Before me stretched a passage of some length, dimly lighted by a small oil-lamp on a bracket fixed against the wall. It seemed to me rather an unlikely sort of place in which to find a customer for my ales. But there was no time for thought; for Legard at once led the way along the passage, with a polite request to me to follow him. I did so without hesitation. Opening a door at the end, he ushered me into a room of considerable dimensions, lighted by a single gas-jet, the sole furniture of which was a couple of chairs and a small table. A click of the door caused me to turn quickly, only to find that I was alone. Legard had vanished without a word. Still, I felt no uneasiness. Advancing to the table, I placed my hat on it, drew off my gloves, unbuttoned my overcoat, and sat down. Then it was I first noticed that a long dark curtain was drawn completely across the lower end of the room.

'PENNY-IN-THE-SLOT' GAS-METERS AND THEIR USERS.

By CANNING WILLIAMS.



TWELVE years ago the first gas-meter designed to supply gas in exchange for coin was patented, the description of the apparatus extending over eighteen closely-printed pages, and being accompanied with twelve sheets of drawings. Since then many different patterns of 'penny-in-the-

slot' gas-meters have been placed upon the market, each claiming to have some special point in its favour.

The measuring and registering portions of prepayment gas-meters do not differ from those of ordinary meters; but, in order that the supply of gas may be shut off when the quantity prepaid has been used, the meter is provided with

apparatus which automatically closes a valve for this purpose. The closing of the valve is a process which occupies several minutes, the gradual lowering of the light warning the consumer that his illuminant is about to be cut off unless another coin is inserted in the slot. At the side of the meter is a box, under lock and key, which receives the coins. This box is periodically emptied of its contents by an official of the gasworks.

The inventor of the original 'slot' meter—Mr Brownhill, of Birmingham—lost no time in bringing his appliance under the notice of some prominent gas engineers; but the general feeling among them was that it was doomed to fail. It was ingenious but impracticable; clever but clumsy. A brighter view of the future of the meter was taken, however, by a Mr Marsh, who canvassed every gas manager in the kingdom on its behalf, and iterated and reiterated a thousand times the virtues of the mechanism. But his eloquence, energy, time, and money were thrown away. Gas managers listened to him with that air of amused interest with which people hearken to the words of enthusiasts, and that was all. But Mr Marsh was resourceful as well as enthusiastic; so, banishing the disappointment which his unavailing tour had created, he proposed to the South Metropolitan Gas Company that a hundred of the meters should be fixed under his guarantee to remove them and pay all costs and damages that might ensue from their use if they proved to be unsuccessful. To a proposal so practical and confident the directors of the company could not well demur; so the meters were fixed, and after a sufficient trial pronounced to be a success. Then the general body of meter-makers, who had previously stood aloof, and quietly enjoyed the difficulties of the parent makers, 'rushed into the field to annex some of the spoil,' as Mr Marsh graphically puts it, and 'so-called prepayment meter inventors became as plentiful as mushrooms in season.'

As to the immense strides which the 'slot' meters have since made in popular estimation, the following words of the secretary of the company above referred to bear convincing witness: 'We began very humbly in 1892'—a considerable interval seems to have elapsed between the experimental installation of the hundred meters and the practical adoption of the system—and for the first six months our receipts from the meters amounted to £172; in 1893 they were £6300; in 1894, £29,600; in 1895, £73,300; in 1896, £119,300; in 1897, £158,100; while last year the amount was £183,600—all in pennies' (*Journal of Gas Lighting*, February 14, 1899). He also stated that at the end of last year they had no less than 80,000 'slot' meters in use in their district of supply. The London Gaslight and Coke Company, whose district is much larger than that of the

South Metropolitan Company, has an even greater number of the meters in operation; and, what to the gas companies is the most satisfactory feature of the business, the great bulk of their prepayment consumers are additional users of gas. At a moderate computation, pennies to the value of £400,000—96,000,000 coins, weighing over 800 tons—were removed from the London 'slot' gas-meters during the year 1898. Taking the whole of the United Kingdom, the figures would probably double those given for London—truly a most marvellous result of a small beginning.

It is not surprising that this wholesale use of copper coinage should have necessitated a great increase in the quantity minted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to this in his Budget speech in 1897, when he said that more than three times as many copper coins were struck during the year 1896-7 as in 1895-6, a large proportion of the additional pennies being no doubt required for prepayment gas-meters.

It is the practice of most of the gas companies and local authorities who supply 'slot' gas-meters to also lay the house pipes and provide and fix the gasfittings and a gas cooking-stove, a satisfactory return on the outlay being obtained from the extra rate for gas charged to the consumers under the prepayment plan. This arrangement, having removed all the old obstacles to the use of gas among those whose means do not permit of the purchase of gas apparatus or the payment of a quarterly gas bill, largely accounts for the great success which has attended the system.

It is interesting in this connection to hear that the bakers in the East End of London have experienced a falling off in their business owing to the great number of gas-stoves which are now used in conjunction with the 'slot' meters in the artisans' dwellings in that district. Cooking by gas is so simple and expeditious, the gas companies would probably say, that it is now no longer necessary to seek the assistance of the professional baker.

One very material good which has resulted from the extended use of prepayment gas-meters is the diminution of fatalities, fires, and minor accidents, caused by paraffin-oil lamps. A few years ago it was stated in a report of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade that the number of notified fires in the Metropolis due to lamp accidents was something like four hundred and fifty a year, the number of lives lost being thirty-three. A vast number of accidents from this cause must, however, have occurred which did not find insertion in the registers of the Fire Brigade.

On the other hand, the meters have been the unfortunate means of increasing the number of petty thefts—robberies from them being of almost daily occurrence in London and the larger towns. The *Daily Telegraph* referred to this in September 1898, in the following words: 'It would seem that the "penny-in-the-slot" gas-meter, rapidly as

it has made headway among a certain class of consumers, and satisfactory as it has no doubt proved to the gas companies, has much to answer for as an encourager of crime.' The prosecuting solicitor in the case which called forth the above comment stated that hundreds of robberies had been committed since the meters had been introduced into London; in many cases the consumers themselves had been tempted in hard-up times to break open the coin-boxes, but oftener the robberies were the work of practised thieves, who, aware that the meters were frequently placed in the coal-cellar or pantry in the front area, went in the night and forcibly despoiled them of the coinage they contained. At another time two boys were charged with stealing money from the meters. The bench ordered them each to receive six strokes with the birch-rod, whereupon the aunt of one of the boys requested the magistrates to 'lay it on thick,' 'and this,' adds the report, 'was done in the course of the afternoon.' In a similar case tried at Manchester it was stated that about ten out of their 26,000 'slot' meters were robbed every week. The moral which should be drawn from these thefts is that the meters should be fixed in positions of greater safety, and be provided with superior padlocks, many of the locks used being of the commonest description.

During the past few years the 'prepayment system' has been to the fore at meetings of British and Irish gas managers. Several papers have been read on the question, and much discussion has followed them. The papers are interesting, and the discussions even more so, the reports of both enlivening the usually almost painful seriousness of the pages of the technical press which is devoted to the gas industry. At a meeting of Irish gas managers a member said that he had had a good deal of trouble with his prepayment consumers as to how long the pennyworth of gas should last; one saying that he obtained six hours' light for a penny, another six and a half, and so on. He was also told by some of them that unless they were supplied with meters similar to So-and-so's, which gave light for two hours longer than theirs, they would discontinue the use of gas. On investigating the matter, he found that these alleged grievances had their origin in false reports

circulated by a few of the consumers in order to annoy those who were inclined to be discontented. The same gentleman remarked that the consumers were often surprised at the number of pennies which were found in the boxes, and one can easily imagine the envious eyes which many a poor Irishwoman would cast upon the coins which the collector removed. Another manager informed his colleagues that he adopted the system of having a separate bag for each 'slot' consumer, into which the collector put the money straight from the box, afterwards counting it at the office, naïvely adding that 'he thought this a very good plan, because the consumers might think they were using too much gas if they saw how much money there was.'

The same meeting was told by one of the speakers that he had supplied a shoemaker with a 'slot' meter, and that the wily old man obtained pennies by saying to his customers, 'Just put a penny in this slot, and you will see a bird come up and sing.' But this was a very mild form of deception compared with the trick of a Lancashire man. This individual bored a neat hole in a penny, inserted in it a piece of string, and dropped the coin into the slot. He then endeavoured to draw it out again for future use; but, much to his discomfiture, he could neither obtain his penny nor the gas, which made things a little awkward for him, especially when the collector sternly demanded an explanation of the affair a few days later. Many other instances might be given of misapplied ingenuity (not to use a more serious word) practised with the object of persuading the meter to give a pennyworth of gas in exchange for a piece of tin or iron, a beaten-out soda-water capsule, or a metal 'check.' These things might be placed in automatic machines at railway stations and in the streets without much fear of detection; but when they are dropped into the slot of a prepayment gas-meter, a day is bound to come when these 'tricks that are vain' will be laid bare. An equally interesting, but far more creditable, fact in connection with the meters is that they are not infrequently used by the consumers as savings-banks—florins being inserted in them instead of pennies, and the balances either claimed or put back in the boxes when the collector calls.

FEUILLETONS.



At the corner of some of the more populous and busy thoroughfares of Paris you will sometimes see a man surrounded by a little knot of bonnetless girls and women, to whom he is distributing broadsheets from a large bundle he holds in his arms. If you hold out your hand he will give you one. One side of the sheet is gaudily illustrated in red

and black. The picture represents, in nine cases out of ten, a distracted-looking damsel, into whose breast the dark-browed villain of melodrama is discharging the contents of a six-chambered revolver; while on the ground the dead body of a murdered infant lies weltering in its gore. Turn the sheet and you will find the first chapters of the latest thing in blood-and-thunder romances which the editor of the *Petit*, or it may

be the *Grand Menteur*, is publishing in daily instalments. The distribution of the brightly-coloured sheet is the time-honoured method for reminding the porters, cooks, and workgirls of the capital that the section of the press that specially caters for them is as solicitous as ever of supplying them with the sort of mental pabulum for which their souls are supposed to yearn.

Of the making of the interminable romances that slowly unfold themselves at the foot of the halfpenny journals of France numberless stories are told. The vast majority of the readers of these papers know little and care less for the great questions that may be convulsing the civilised world at the moment. Provided the *feuilletons* be sufficiently stuffed with exciting episodes, they are prepared to swallow, with closed eyes, whatever enormities are printed in the other part of the paper.

For Millaud, the founder of the famous *Petit Journal* of Paris—a 'largest circulation in the world'—the *feuilleton* was everything. When he got hold of something that struck him as suitable his joy was boundless. No 'sacrifice' in the way of bold advertisement dismayed him. When it was a rival paper that got hold of a good thing Millaud fell into the lowest depths of despair. One day he learned that a competitor for the favour of the public was about to commence a *feuilleton* having the sensational title of 'The Man with Four Wives.' 'By the shades of Paris!' he shouted 'we must be equal with them.' Without losing an instant he despatched messengers all over the town with injunctions to bring into his presence, drunk or sober, a certain writer whose literary talent he held in great esteem.

'Look here,' said Millaud, 'I must have something as good as that. Sit down there and write me out the first chapters now.'

'Impossible, my dear sir! At the present moment I have not an idea in my head.'

'What, sir! You dare to call yourself an author and are not ashamed to admit you have no ideas. I will teach you, sir. Sit down; we will do the thing together.'

What went on exactly behind the closed door is uncertain; but at the end of three hours the first two chapters of a story that warmed the cockles of Millaud's heart were ready for the printers. The publication, it was decided, should be delayed for a day or two, in order that the curiosity of the readers might be properly whetted. On the following morning, at the head of the first column of the paper, this notice was printed in large type:

DEAR READER!

Invent, imagine, suppose;

Ransack your brain, leave no corner unsearched;
Seek some fatality that will blind you with horror—
Something undreamed of, mad, too horrible for words;
Concoct some dreadful poison; discover some abyss
Blacker than Crime, deeper than Folly:
Never, never will you come near my subject.

The foregoing, which is a very slightly parodied version of the celebrated tirade in *Ruy Blas*, was followed by the words, 'which, tomorrow, the *Petit Journal* will commence to treat of, under the title of "Death by Laughing."' The success of the story was tremendous, and fully maintained the reputation of the paper.

Though the halfpenny journal *feuilletoniste* may not practise literature in its highest form, it is not the first-comer who can hope to excel in the art. Men who have once caught the ear of their special public can command very large sums of money for their work, and find in their material prosperity consolation for the knowledge that their names will not go down to posterity. Their traducers maintain that the whole secret consists in terminating each instalment in such a manner that the reader must wait with impatience for the continuation. Ernest Blum, the author of so many rollicking farces, publishes the full recipe in his diary: 'You may serve up whatever absurdity comes into your head, provided you terminate each instalment something in this fashion: "The assassin entered the room; the Countess shrieked. . . . (To be continued);" or this: "Suddenly, in the doorway, a man's figure was outlined. Who was that man? (To be continued.)"' Blum also gives an example of an ending that missed fire: 'The elephant seized Robert round the waist, and raised him high in the air! (To be continued.)' After reading this he waited, he says, with considerable anxiety for the morrow, as he had become deeply interested in Robert's welfare. When the next issue of the paper arrived, however, he read: 'We will now leave Robert for some time in the grasp of the elephant; the reader is already quite sufficiently acquainted with our hero's energetic character to divine that, somehow or other, he will not let the elephant have the last word in the dispute.' A good many readers, it is to be feared, like the diarist, then and there renounced all further interest in the energetic Robert.

A reproach commonly levelled at the head of many of the most renowned *feuilletonistes* of the day is that they frequently put their names to stories that somebody else has written. One of the past-masters in the art of concocting solutions of horror double distilled recently had an order to surpass himself for one of the leading Paris papers. The honorarium was a handsome one—something like two thousand five hundred pounds, it is said. On the day announced the first instalment, treating naturally of rapine, murder, and sudden death, duly appeared. Every twenty-four hours thereafter a fresh supply of horror was as sure to be forthcoming as the sun was of rising. The world of Paris domesticity spoke of nothing else. Assured of the success of the story, the author hied him off to sunnier climes to pass the winter, after first having taken the precaution of seeing

that the printers had 'plenty to go on with.' To tell the truth, not a line of the story had been penned by himself. The inventive faculties of even the most celebrated of celebrated authors are apt to feel the strain after a lifetime spent in imagining murders and robberies. The author in question was in this case a talented professor, an acquaintance of the *feuilletoniste*, who had arranged to do the story for him at the rate of fifty centimes a line, a fraction of what he himself was to pocket. His *dolce far niente* on the Riviera was rudely disturbed one day by the receipt of a telegram from the paper: 'Only enough copy for another fortnight! Send on continuation and conclusion.' It was the work of a few seconds to run to the telegraph office and send a message to the professor, urging him to put his shoulder to the wheel. No answer came; but two days later brought another telegram from the paper couched in more energetic terms. The author jumped into the first train for Paris, only to find when he reached the capital that his substitute had been inconsiderate enough to die. At the sight of her visitor's despair the widow almost forgot her own grief!

'Promise to pay me the fifty centimes a line as long as the story goes on,' she said, 'and I will tell you where the end of it is.'

'It's a promise.'

'My poor husband had no time to write himself, so he arranged with an usher he knew to do it for him at the rate of a halfpenny a line.'

'The address of that usher—quick!'

Half-an-hour later the author was knocking at the door of a cramming establishment in a distant suburb.

'M. Chatol lives here?'

'Yes, sir. At least he did until this morning, when he left to do his annual military service, and he has not left his address.'

'Take my card to the head-master, and say I would like to see him on a very urgent matter.'

The head-master was profuse in his regrets at his assistant's sudden departure. 'Best man I ever had, sir. Hardly knew how to read himself, and yet kept the boys working from morning to night.'

'Don't you think if you were to look over any

papers he may have left behind him you might be able to find his address?'

'Not the least chance, I fear. All the time he was here I never saw him once with a pen in his hand.'

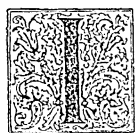
The celebrated author rushed from the house feeling he was on the brink of madness. What was he to do now? Stop the publication and so lose the money of which he stood rather in need at the moment? Ask a *confrère* to help him, and thus admit his duplicity? Cut the story short by killing the hero in the next chapter? Alas! alas! With the exception of the hero's name he knew nothing whatever about him. It was a point of honour with him never to read his own works! There appeared to be only two practical alternatives: commit suicide or terminate the story himself. He chose the latter, and gloomily waded through three months of gore. When he had concluded his brain was in a whirl. Names of places and persons, murders and suicides, the dead and the living, were inextricably mingled in what was left of his mind. He made a great effort, however, and sat down to work. After he had composed a few hundred lines, he considered his revolver very attentively, and tried to recall Hamlet's soliloquy. He had not got very far, when a telegram was brought to him. Languidly he opened it. What good could possibly happen to him now? Suddenly he rubbed his glasses furiously to make sure they were not playing him false. 'Received continuation and conclusion. Splendid. Congratulations and thanks.' He gave up trying to think what it all meant. He was saved and was happy. For the present that was sufficient.

A month later, when the usher returned, the mystery was unravelled. 'Perfectly simple, my dear sir. I made my pupils do the work. Splendid mental exercise for them, I assure you. The morning I left, the thing was just finished, so I took the manuscript with me and handed it in at the newspaper office on my way to the railway station.'

The accuracy of this story in its main details is vouched for by a well-known French literary man.

Se non è vero.

CUCKOO MIMICRY.



IN the Oölogical Department of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington a collection has been formed of some sixty clutches of eggs each of which contains the egg of a cuckoo. These clutches represent about thirty species of birds, and show the extraordinary variety in the colouring of a cuckoo's egg from perfect 'mimicry' to striking

contrast. The hedge-sparrow—the most frequent foster-parent of the cuckoo—lays a turquoise-blue egg, whilst the ordinary colour of the cuckoo's egg is a dull speckled-brown, very like that of a skylark. In the Natural History Museum collection there are six clutches of eggs of the hedge-sparrow, each containing a cuckoo's egg. The localities from which they come are as follows: (1) Brighton, (2) Hayward's Heath,

(3) South-west Lancashire, (4) North-west Cheshire, (5) and (6) Hampshire. In the case of No. 1 (Brighton) the cuckoo's egg is the counterpart of the hedge-sparrow's in texture and colour, though almost twice as large—a wonderful instance of mimicry. In all the other cases (Nos. 2-6) the cuckoo's egg is the ordinary dull speckled-brown—a striking contrast. In the case of two other species—the pied flycatcher (Silesia) and the redstart (Vaalkerstard), both of which lay blue eggs—the cuckoo imitates their colour, but the egg is much larger; in the nest, however, of a Danish redstart the cuckoo laid an egg of a pale mottled-drab. In the following instances the imitative colouring is very perfect, the eggs being generally double the size of those of the foster-parent: Lesser whitethroat, mottled greenish-gray (Halle, Saxony); Orphean warbler, white, pale greenish-blue, spotted (Malaga); garden warbler, buff-speckled (Brandenburg); blue-headed yellow wagtail, gray-speckled (Frankfort-on-Oder); barred warbler, pale mottled-green (Alsace); meadow-pipit, reddish-brown (North-west Cheshire); white wagtail, gray-speckled (Germany); linnet, white, greenish spots (Germany). In the case of the red-backed shrike or butcher-bird (Marne), the resemblance between the two eggs in size and in colouring—cream body-colour with reddish cloud at the upper end—is so remarkable that in this instance one might be pardoned for imagining that there had been some mistake.

In the following instances the cuckoo seems to have made no apparent effort to effect mimicry, but to have been contented to lay its normal brown-speckled egg: wren, white, with pinkish-brown spots (Pomerania); garden warbler white, buff blotches (Warwickshire); reed warbler, white, greenish spots (Middlesex); yellow-hammer, gray, dark pencilled marks (Surrey); curl bunting, gray, dark markings and blotches (Surrey). After an examination of the above-mentioned specimens it is somewhat difficult to arrive at any conclusion as to the instinct or method of the cuckoo with regard to mimicry. Why does a Brighton cuckoo lay a blue egg, and a Hayward's Heath cuckoo (almost a neighbour) lay a brown egg, in a hedge-sparrow's nest? Is one cuckoo gifted with more brain power (and likewise a more varied assortment of colouring matter) than another cuckoo, or are the large eggs merely double yolks of the nesting-bird, as we sometimes find in the case of the ordinary farm-yard hen. Professor Newton, when writing on this subject in his *Dictionary of Birds* (1893), says at page 121: 'But a much more curious assertion has been also made, and one that at first sight appears so incomprehensible as to cause little surprise at the neglect it long encountered. Ælian, who flourished in the second century, declared (*De Nat. Anim.* III. xxx.) that the cuckoo laid eggs in the nests of those birds only that produced eggs like her own—a statement which is, of course, too general; but in

1767 currency was given to it by Salerne (*L'Hist. Nat. Ois.*, p. 42), who was hardly a believer in it; and it is to the effect, as he was told by an inhabitant of Sologne, that the egg of a cuckoo resembles in colour that of the eggs normally laid by the kind of bird in whose nest it is placed. In 1853 the same notion was prominently and independently brought forward by Dr Beldanus (*Nau-mania*, 1853, pp. 307-25), and in time became known to British ornithologists, most of whom were sceptical of its truth, as well they might be, since no likeness whatever is ordinarily apparent in the very familiar case of the blue-green egg of the hedge-sparrow and that of the cuckoo, which is so often found beside it.' Dr Beldanus based his notion on a series of cuckoos' eggs in his own cabinet, a selection from which he afterwards figured in illustration of his paper. This collection was seen by Professor Newton, who, after dismissing the supposition that the eggs were wrongly ascribed to the cuckoo, came to the conclusion that the mimicry must be accounted for by the law of natural selection and a hereditary tendency of the cuckoo to place its egg in the nest of a particular species.

The learned professor in the course of his interesting article states that one Herr Branne, a forester at Greitz in Reuss, shot a hen cuckoo just as she was leaving the nest of an Icterine warbler. In the oviduct of the cuckoo he found an egg coloured very like that of the warbler; and on looking into the nest he found an exactly similar egg, which there could be no reasonable doubt had just been laid by that very cuckoo. This instance, assuming its authenticity, would certainly go far to prove that, by some law or instinct of which we have little, if any, knowledge, the cuckoo is able to produce an egg resembling in colour and texture that of the bird in whose nest it is to be placed for hatching.

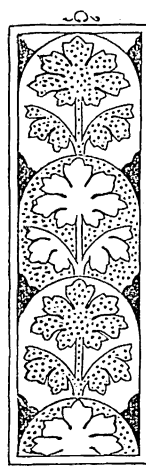
'THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH.'

No Knight rides forth upon a summer morn
To seek adventure for a day and year,
No drawbridge falls at summons of his horn,
No wrathful foe doth prove his sword and spear,
Nor battle giveth he for maid forlorn;
No seneschal doth bid a courteous cheer.

Though the old armour rusteth on the wall,
And the good sword hath now no power to bite,
No mailed heel ring through the quiet hall,
No charger paw the ground at morning's light,
Yet may he still do work not mean or small—
Still may he be a 'perfect, gentle Knight.'

Still lives the high ideal; still the strong
May help the weak, may succour the distressed,
Lighten the burden that the age's wrong
Lays on the wretched; still may he invest
His soul with knighthood, though no minstrel song
Greet his emprise or glory in his quest.

C. J. GRIFFIN.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE PROOF-READER.

By MICHAEL MACDONAGH.



THE REV. JAMES PYECROFT, in his little-known work entitled *Ways and Words of Men of Letters*, relates an amusing story told him by a printer.

'Really,' said the printer to him, 'gentlemen should not place unlimited confidence in the eyesight of our hard-worked and half-blinded readers of proofs; for I am ashamed to say that we utterly ruined one poet through a ludicrous misprint.'

'Indeed! And what was that unhappy line?'

'Why, sir, the poet intended to say:

See the pale martyr in his sheet of fire!

Instead of which, he was made to say:

See the pale martyr *with his shirt on fire!*

The reviewers, of course, made the most of so entertaining a blunder, and the poor poet was never heard of more in the field of literature.'

The proof-reader—who in this anecdote is held responsible for having nipped in the bud the promise of a rising young poet—is a personage who, though little known, perhaps, to the general public, fills an important and responsible position in all newspaper, publishing, and printing establishments. His duties may be briefly explained.

According as sections of a book or the articles and reports of a newspaper are put into type—or 'set,' to use the technical term—by the compositors, proofs of the matter are printed, and sent to the reader, who goes carefully through them, in search of wrongly-spelt words, mistakes in punctuation, ungrammatical expressions, turned letters, omissions of words, and other errors of a like nature, unwittingly perpetrated by the compositor in the hurry of the operation of putting the 'copy' into type. But that is not all. The proof-readers are also expected to see that statements of fact—historical, scientific, geographical, political—are correct, and to verify literary allusions and quotations.

In newspaper offices the proof-reader has to

bear the blame for what is popularly known as 'printers' errors.' The compositor, as a rule, follows rigidly the 'copy' given him to put into type. It is, of course, no business of his to verify the doubtful statements of a contributor or a reporter. But he is not even held responsible should any of the typographical errors which inevitably occur in the process of setting pass undetected into the printed newspaper. It is the proof-reader who is called to account by the editor for these incongruous and laughable misprints, of which the Rev. Mr Pyecroft gives an amusing illustration, and which are originally due to the compositor. For instance, some years ago the following apologetic explanation for a compositor's blunder appeared in a leading weekly literary journal published in London:

'In our last number, as we discovered unfortunately too late for correction, we announced that Mr John Stuart Mill's inaugural address lately delivered before the University of St Andrews had since been republished by him "in the form of a five shilling elephant." Even the most ardent believers in Mr Mill's powers among our readers will probably have received this announcement with some incredulity. The fact is that by an error of the press the word "elephant" was substituted for "pamphlet;" and the mistake—although the proof was read and re-read—unluckily escaped the corrector's eye.'

A proof-reader needs to be intelligent and widely read, diligent and painstaking, and possessed of a sharp, keen eye. He has often to discharge his onerous duties amid unfavourable and uncomfortable surroundings. The proof-reader's 'room' is generally some small and obscure closet off the composing-room. On the walls are pasted old proofs containing curious printers' errors underlined with blue pencil, and some pictures from the illustrated papers. The only book of reference in the room may be a well-thumbed dictionary. The readers—two, three, or four in number, according to the size and im-

portance of the newspaper—sit at desks or tables, with proofs before them, each with a boy—the well-known 'printers' devil,' his clothes smeared with ink, oil, and paste—reading the copy from which the matter in the proofs has been 'set' by the compositors. Some of these boys acquire from long practice an amazing facility in deciphering even the most crabbed handwriting, and they race through the copy at so fast a pace that the readers are often sore pressed to keep up with them. But, worse than that, others of the boys gabble over copy, murdering the pronunciation, travestying the meaning, to the distraction and bewilderment of the proof-readers, who are filled with fear and anxiety lest an error should pass undetected. The jumble of voices as the boys rattle through their copy—leading articles, political speeches, advertisements, police court reports, descriptions of disasters, fashionable intelligence—produces effects that are often very amusing. Something like this may be heard through the long night in the proof-reader's room:

'We tell the Government that at the next General Election they will be overwhelmed by'—'the waves, rising mountains high, swept the decks of the ill-fated ship; and the passengers in their wild terror'—'will sell by auction at their Mart the well-appointed furniture and culinary effects removed from Bracebridge Hall'—'after which the right hon. gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, with characteristic elephantine attempts at humour, waxed depressingly merry over the announcement by the Prime Minister that'—'a marriage is arranged, and will take place at the end of October, between the Hon. Robert Heron and Lady Mary Betty'—'They were both sent to prison for twelve months, with hard labour.'

In the case of monthly magazines and weekly journals, proofs of contributions are sent to the authors; and ambiguous phrases, incomplete sentences, bad grammar, and errors of statement are queried by the proof-reader. His note of interrogation (?) on the margin of the proof opposite a doubtful point often saves a writer from that deep vexation which follows the discovery of an error too late for correction. But these measures of precaution are impossible in the case of a daily newspaper, for there are early trains and posts to be caught; and thus the gaiety of nations is contributed to by such startling and ludicrous renderings as made so sad a mess of Thomas Moore's 'Ode to the Spring':

When I talk'd of the 'dewdrops from freshly blown roses,'
The nasty things made it 'from freshly blown noses'!
And once when, to please my cross aunt, I had tried
To commemorate some saint of her clique who'd died,
Having said he 'had tak'n up in heav'n his position,'
They made it, he'd 'taken up to heav'n his physician'!

But these blunders are not infrequently due to the bad writing of authors, and occasionally, too, to slips for which they themselves are responsible. Macaulay was very particular about his proofs.

He 'could not rest until the lines were level to a hairbreadth, and the punctuation correct to a comma,' as Sir George Trevelyan tells us. But he was once caught napping with disastrous consequences to his peace of mind. In attacking in the *Edinburgh Review* Gleig's *Life of Warren Hastings*, he observed, through a slip of the pen, 'that it would be unjust to estimate Goldsmith by the *Vicar of Wakefield*, or Scott by the *Life of Napoleon*.' Macaulay, says his biographer, could imagine no greater calamity than to 'pose before the world for three mortal months in the character of a critic who thought the *Vicar of Wakefield* a bad book.' What the famous critic meant to condemn was Goldsmith's *History of Greece*. He felt the slip so keenly that he actually wanted Macvey Napier, the editor, to publish a special edition of the *Edinburgh Review* to set him right with his readers; and his request being, of course, refused, he passed a miserable three months until the next issue of the 'blue and yellow' quarterly appeared with the correction.

Another curious slip of the pen of a similar character was made by Sir Archibald Alison in the passage in the *History of Europe* where he describes the funeral of the Duke of Wellington. In the list of pall-bearers appeared the name of *Sir Peregrine Pickle* for that of Sir Peregrine Maitland. When Alison read the proof he was furious with printer and proof-reader, ascribing the blunder to them; but the manuscript was looked up, and lo! the mistake was the historian's.

Dean Stanley, who wrote a bad hand, confessed that when he got his proofs he felt ashamed of the infliction he imposed on the ingenuity and on the patience of the printer and proof-reader. 'Nothing,' said he, 'enlivens an author so much when plodding through the weary pages he has written as the ingenious conjectures made by the printer to decipher what he has penned.' He once got a proof of an article, in which he had made an allusion to a merchant, of the Elizabethan era whose name he had forgotten, with a note from the proof-reader on the margin opposite the blank suggesting correctly that perhaps 'So-and-so' was the person referred to. 'It showed,' said the Dean, 'that those to whom the pages are committed are not the mere mechanical interpreters of what is written.'

In the new edition of *Who's Who?* the Bishop of Oxford confesses that 'correcting proof-sheets' is with him a 'recreation.' Indeed, his lordship has given as an excuse for publishing his *Lectures on Mediæval and Modern History* that 'the love of correcting proof-sheets has become a leading passion with the author.' To the professional proof-reader this declaration will hardly appeal with the note of absolute conviction. He, at least, finds little 'recreation' in his wary and watchful pursuit of compositors' errors through columns upon columns of matter. And the worst of it is that he cannot leave behind him in his working-room this feverish anxiety to ferret out errors of the press. He is

so possessed of it that even at home he cannot read a newspaper or book with any degree of comfort. An old proof-reader told us once that, though he may be reading merely for pleasure, he finds himself searching for printers' errors to the neglect of the sense of the matter. 'It only needs a comma

or a semicolon to be omitted,' said he, 'a letter to be dropped or transposed, or even an "s" to be inverted—one of the most difficult mistakes to detect—to set me fumbling for a pencil in order that I may mark the mistake on the margin.'

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER III.—A PROSCRIBED JACOBITE.



CANNOT describe the effect of my host's announcement, but assuredly it gave him sufficient ground for his mirth. To me 'twas both astounding and incredible; it seemed not less so to his daughter; and the pair of us could but look at each other and at him in puzzled amazement. For a minute he enjoyed our surprise, and then went on:

'Mrs Herbert you know already, Mr Holroyd; she is good enough to take care of this wilful child, and I dare say has her work.' He turned again to his daughter, still laughingly. 'But what is this, Kitty? Am I to apologise for a cold greeting to a kinsman?'

Thereat she advanced, her eyes downcast, and proffered me her hand. 'I am glad to see you so much recovered, sir,' she said in the low-pitched, musical voice that I remembered so well.

I took her hand, and was raising it to my lips, when Mr Morell interposed.

'Fie, fie! "Sir" to a cousin?' cried he. 'And your hand—is that convent schooling, Mrs Herbert? Your cheek, girl!'

She stole a swift glance, while the red deepened; and, for me, I confess that 'twas with an unwonted but most agreeable sensation that I availed myself of the paternal injunction to her, and lightly brushed her cheek. If this were one of the privileges, be sure I had no objection to my new relationship!

None the less were we still in the dark, and my host was in no hurry to enlighten us.

'Even yet you both appear to be rather doubtful,' quoth he, quizzing us.

'The fact itself is one with which I have no mind to quarrel,' said I. 'I am only wondering how it comes about.'

'Simply enough: two of your respective grandmothers happened to be sisters.'

'But—Morell?' To my certain knowledge, I had no relations of that name.

'A little disguise that may be dropped among friends! I have given you the lead, Cousin George. Surely I have not changed so greatly since our last meeting?'

The hint had set my mind working; the sense of something familiar in his handsome countenance and gallant, debonair manner returned to me with added strength; and suddenly the recollection

came. 'Twas that of a late autumn evening fourteen years back, when a long-legged boy had swung on a branch in a well-loved beech avenue up in Yorkshire, and waved an envious adieu to a cavalier as he rode away from the gates of Dunsyre House.

'Sir Charles Hollingworth!' I cried.

'Otherwise Dare-devil Charlie, you would say—Jacobite and proscribed rebel that is—exile that should be? Well, you have hit it, cousin. There is five hundred pounds on my head—and I am at your mercy.'

Now I marvelled that I should ever have failed to recognise him. My father's cousin and near neighbour, he had been the hero of my boyhood; I had seen much of him, and heard more. The byname was that of the Riding, and had been earned by a hundred wild escapades long before the chief of all—that by which he had lost title and estates and the right to breathe his native air. For, brave to a fault, he had been one of the few English Jacobites to take arms in the affair of the '45. After proclaiming James III. at the cross of our market-town, he had ridden at the head of a little band of tenants and servants to join the Young Chevalier at Manchester on his southward march to Derby, had cut his way through a company of dragoons that tried to intercept him, and had fought throughout the campaign that ended at Culloden. Thereafter he had made a daring escape to France, whence rumours of his doings had reached us from time to time. His wife had died in these early days of banishment, leaving one little girl; I could recall her as an imperious mite of four or five, with whom I had sometimes condescended to play. For the rest, such was the reputation of Sir Charles as an able and fearless conspirator that his name had been excluded from the Act of Indemnity lately passed by the clemency of His Gracious Majesty.

And now the exile was back in England, and by the strangest chance we had been brought together—to what end? At that moment Sir Charles's object did not trouble me, little likely though it were to be friendly to the monarch whose servant I was. Just then all my thoughts were of the past.

'Fourteen years ago!' I said. 'Yet I should not have forgotten you, Sir Charles. I tried to

ride your gray mare while you were indoors with the *pater*!—

'Twas the last time I saw dear old Bevil! And so you remember the gray?'

'She almost threw me, and would have done so had you not come out and called to her. I was sent to bed in disgrace, but stole out and climbed the great beech by the gates to see you ride off to join the wild Highlandmen.'

'Brave days, lad! Poor Bride was killed under me at Culloden, and I—well, I had many a weary mile to trudge afoot before my neck was safe.'

So we ran on in the friendliest fashion, and none of us (save perhaps Mrs Herbert, who was placidly knitting) was unmoved by these old-time memories. Meanwhile we had drawn together round the fire, where I was comfortably seated in the warmest corner.

'But Cousin Kitty here,' I said presently—'her I have had the happiness to meet since then.'

She cast me a quick, meaning look—was it of warning or entreaty? 'Why, certainly,' said she. 'I was not too young to remember the great boy who played the tyrant over me, and made me cry by telling me that my father would be shot by the Duke, and at other times was good and taught me to ride his pony. I have been trying to find the likeness between you.'

'There is none,' I replied gravely. 'My nature, thanks to unceasing efforts, has entirely changed.'

'For the better?'

'It has been my hope. But I was not thinking of ancient history. I have seen you more recently, cousin.'

Again the same look from her eyes, while a shade of anxiety crossed her face; and I could not doubt that, for some reason, she wished to hide the fact of our meeting on the stair-head.

'Surely you are mistaken?' she suggested.

'Then I must have dreamt it—that last night you were one of my nurses.—Was it not so, Sir Charles?'

She had a pretty trick of blushing, and her rising colour told me that my guess was a good one—and also, if I were not in error, that my evasion did not displease her.

'Right, egad!' cried my host, with his engaging laugh. 'And a deal of nonsense you talked, too!'

'Truly? Well, my cousin must believe me that it is quite against my habit,' I said.

The afternoon sped as we sat there by the fire, conversing agreeably of old friends and familiar places in the kindly north-country, and latterly of the exile's adventures. They had been many and varied; he had undergone every vicissitude of fortune, from the highest court favour to neglect and the cold shoulder, and from responsible military commands to sharing a garret in the Luxembourg quarter with a brother-refugee; he had fought and intrigued in half the capitals of Europe; and I read the man wrongly if he had not comported himself through it all, good and

ill alike, with the same courage and imperturbable cheerfulness. Once only could I detect a trace of bitterness in his tone, and that was when he spoke of an enemy through whom he had lost the favour of Versailles and been deprived of his command.

'It would have mattered less had the fellow not been a Yorkshireman, too,' he said. 'But 'twas an old score between us, and he took advantage of his position to pay it in full. He was English ambassador to Paris then. To-day he holds a greater office.'

I could not but recognise, not without regret, that he must mean my chief, Lord Kynaston. It could be no other; indeed, I had myself been first recommended to my lord by my Yorkshire blood; and now I minded me of the bruit of some ancient rivalry, not unconnected with love, between him and my kinsman. Presently I had confirmation from Sir Charles.

'Yet I should not grumble,' he went on. 'After all, the score betwixt us is fairly even. I beat him in love; so far, he has beaten me in war. And perhaps the account is not closed. Who knows?'

Here, it may be, I should have mentioned my official relation towards my lord. The point was one of honour; there were reasons to the contrary; and before I could make up my mind the conversation had changed. As it befell, 'twas of small consequence in the upshot.

Hitherto, in truth, we had seemed to avoid (by design or otherwise) all reference to the curious situation in which chance had placed us. A little later, however, this reserve was broken by my host himself.

'Confess, George, that all this time you have been wondering why I have ventured back to England,' he said.

'Assuredly it seems foolhardy,' I admitted.

'A chance to mend one's fortune is worth some risk. And I have business on hand that promises so much. If it fail—why, there is always New England or Canada for Kitty and me!'

'But the danger?'

'Pooh! Danger has been my bedfellow for twenty years. Then this house—it has been lent to me by my good friend Mr Kennett—'tis quite secluded, and who is to suspect the rebel and outlaw in Mr Morell, a peaceable and retiring gentleman?'

I shook my head, unconvinced.

'Besides, to speak truth,' he continued, 'France is scarcely more healthy for me than England just now. La Pompadour—bless her!—is pleased to object to my manners. Come the worst, I don't know that I should not choose a quick exit on Tower Hill to the living death of the Bastille. Well, *regarde la galère*,' cried he, laughing, 'you will not betray me, Cousin George?'

My eyes sought those of Kitty. 'There can be no question of that betwixt Holroyd and Hollingworth,' said I.

'I did not doubt it for an instant, lad,' said he. 'As to yourself, you will not now refuse

to share our retreat for a few days—until, at least, you are quite better?’

‘Believe me, there is nothing I should like more,’ I assured him, and meant it. ‘But my business—already, indeed, I should be on my way to Bath.’

‘Tis not to be thought of in your present state,’ he said with decision. ‘You would never reach it, and Kitty and I could never forgive ourselves for any mishap. To-morrow, perhaps—or we might even find some means of sending a message for you, if that would serve.’

The proposal commended itself (at first sight) as a good compromise betwixt inclination and duty, but at this point its discussion was interrupted by a sudden clamour without; and next moment the door was thrown open, and a man, cloaked and booted for riding, entered hurriedly and not too ceremoniously.

‘The horses are waiting, Sir Charles.’ Then, seeing us, he broke off. ‘Oh! I crave pardon. Give you good-day, Mrs Herbert.—Your servant, Miss Kitty.—Yours, sir.’

The new-comer and I regarded each other with interest as Sir Charles introduced us in due form. He was a tall, well-favoured young fellow, with a countenance that expressed honesty and some obstinacy; and, as I had conjectured at once, he was the Mr Kennett of Langbridge whose name I had already heard. I hastened to render him my thanks for the great service that he had done me on the previous evening.

‘I cannot be too grateful to you and Sir Charles,’ I added.

‘The credit is wholly his,’ he returned, bowing.

‘Our meeting with Mr Holroyd was doubly fortunate,’ explained my host, ‘in that he proves to be a near kinsman of mine, and an old playmate of Kitty’s.’

He showed some surprise, but made no remark; and then, with a word of apology, Sir Charles and he drew aside to the window and conferred together in a whisper. I seated myself again beside Kitty, who was deep in thought. After a little she leaned to me.

‘You will do me a favour, Cousin George?’ she asked in my ear.

‘Why, surely,’ said I.

‘Tis that you say nothing to my father of—of what you saw last evening,’ she went on hastily. ‘There are reasons, but I cannot explain at present. You will do it?’

I nodded my assent: her eyes appealed to me too eloquently to permit of hesitation. Yet I could not help wondering what the reasons were. Other and stranger fancies began to clamour for foothold in my brain in the few minutes that followed; but before I had leisure to sift them Sir Charles addressed us.

‘I am glad to find I can serve your purpose myself, George,’ said he. ‘We must ride to Bath at once—Mr Kennett and I—and if you care to

entrust me with a letter or a message, I can promise its safe delivery. Now, what say you?’

To be frank, the offer was not too welcome. You will understand my dilemma; for any message must be to my Lord Kynaston, and was bound to give Sir Charles an inkling of the truth; and thus the question of our relative positions, which I should have preferred to avoid until I could choose my own time and company, must be faced forthwith. True, I might forge an excuse for declining the present proposal. A moment’s consideration showed me that in honour I had no alternative save to accept it—and its consequences.

I did so with a proper assumption of eagerness. ‘A letter would be the better, perhaps,’ I added; ‘and were it not for this unlucky shoulder of mine’—and I touched my sling.

‘Oh, as to that,’ interrupted Sir Charles lightly, ‘Kitty there can be your clerk. The Sisters have taught her a good hand.’

‘Then if she will be so kind’—

‘Twill be a pleasure,’ she said, and hastened to get out the ink and paper.

I had the opportunity while she was so engaged to think over the wording of the letter. I made it as simple and brief as might be, and in effect it ran thus: That, having been waylaid in that vicinity by highwaymen on the previous evening, I had tried to cover the flight of the servant, and hoped that he had reached Bath safely with certain papers for my lord in his charge; that, for myself, I had been slightly wounded in the right shoulder (whence the writing by another hand), but had been succoured in time by two gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and since then had been hospitably entertained by one of them, Mr Morell, at the Dower-house of Langbridge; that I was now almost recovered; and, finally, that I begged his lordship, if Joseph had not arrived, to send a chaise thither for me without delay.

Now all this I spoke, so that Sir Charles should not miss a word, and meanwhile, of set design, kept my eyes on the fair scribe. Presently ’twas written down—and written, too, most speedily and well—and I made shift to scrawl my signature.

‘And the address, Cousin George?’ asked Kitty when the letter had been sealed.

The moment had come for which I had been waiting, and still I did not look up as I answered in the quietest tones that I could command:

‘This, if you please—“To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Kynaston, at Combermere House.”’

My expectation was fulfilled. The pen dropped from Kitty’s fingers, and she turned to me with an expression of utter amazement; for a full minute there was dead silence; I felt, rather than saw, the telling effect of my words upon the two men; and then the tension was broken by an exclamation from Kennett.

‘Kynaston! The Secretary of State!’

And at length I looked up. For Kennett I had

scarce a glance, albeit his excitement was plain enough: I was too much startled by the change in Sir Charles. He seemed a different man; his face was harder, sterner, and almost cruel; there was a light in his eyes that I can only compare

to the glitter of steel. Manifestly his mind was not running on the Christian virtues.

'Oh!' said he. 'A friend of yours, cousin?'

Then I burned my boats. 'I have the honour to be my lord's personal secretary,' I said.

ADDER BITES.



HE adder (*Vipera berus*) is still common in our woods and heaths in most parts of the country, though rarely seen owing to the fact that it dwells among thickets of bramble, gorse, and other bushes, into the recesses of which, when approached, it generally flees so noiselessly and swiftly that the casual passer-by is not even aware of its presence. Many may be found on carefully searching in the neighbourhood of most seaside holiday resorts—among others, Folkestone, Seaford, Bournemouth, Bude, and Clovelly; while in parts of the New Forest they are very numerous. They abound also on many Scotch moors.

Before relating the effects of four bites which the writer has received from these venomous little reptiles, it may be as well to describe briefly their appearance and the mechanism of their poison-apparatus, as these may not be familiar to some readers. Adders attain usually a length of about twenty inches, very seldom reaching two feet. The writer has seen one which measured twenty-seven and a quarter inches, while one has been recorded in the *Field* measuring twenty-nine inches.

They are stoutly built; the head is flat, and broad behind; the tail is short and blunt. The reptile is of a somewhat 'depressed' form, and can flatten itself out considerably. The ground colour is usually some shade of pale gray or brown, sometimes brick-red, or even almost black. On the head is a V-shaped dark mark, or rather pair of converging lines; this, while often quoted in books as a means of recognition of the species, is anything but conspicuous. An adder may, however, always be recognised by the continuous chain of dark-brown, lozenge-shaped blotches running along the whole length of its back. This chain varies somewhat in different specimens as to breadth and vividness, but is invariably present; it is, on the other hand, entirely lacking in the harmless grass or ringed snake (*Tropedonotus natrix*). There is also a row of dark spots along each side.

The so-called 'poison-bags' are modified salivary glands. They lie behind the snake's eyes, where the head is broadest; the venom (which closely resembles the saliva of human beings and other animals in appearance, and has strong digestive properties) is conveyed by two thin tubes or ducts to the fangs. The latter are two long, slender, extremely sharp-pointed teeth, one on

each side of the upper jaw (or rather, one in each upper jaw, for the jaws of a snake are divided into two parts at the middle, the animal thus having two upper jaws and two lower ones). The fangs are hollow, and near the tip of each is a perforation. When an adder wishes to poison its prey—a field-mouse, for instance—or an enemy, it opens its mouth widely, erects its fangs (which ordinarily lie back along the palate), and plunges them into the flesh of its victim with a rapid stabbing motion; muscles compress forcibly the venom-glands, driving a tiny drop of venom down each fang, from the tip of which it is squirted into the wound through the above-mentioned perforation. The blow is given and the head withdrawn with such swiftness that one's eye cannot follow the action. The bite may be delivered from a distance equal, at the most, to half the snake's length. The venom attacks chiefly the nerve centres which govern respiration; and if the victim be a small animal it undergoes a process of suffocation until it dies.

The English adder—or, as it should be called, the northern adder, for it ranges over the north of Europe and through Siberia to the eastern extremity of Asia—has not such strong venomous powers as some other species of viper of its own size in hot countries, such as *Vipera aspis* (the southern adder), *Vipera cerastes* (the horned viper), and the deadly little *Echis carinata* (or carpet viper); but its bite occasionally causes death. Five cases of this have been recorded in print during the last forty years, and others have occurred. The effect on a healthy adult is, however, though severe for some hours or days, usually transitory.

The writer has been bitten four times by adders within a period of thirteen months; the effects were in all cases confined to the ensuing week, and no after-effects whatever have been felt.

On August 16, 1897, while I was enjoying a picnic with some friends in a field near Alfriston, Sussex, on the verge of a wood, a fine adder was discovered basking in the sunshine a few yards from our party. This one, a very handsome specimen, of a pale-yellowish hue, with well-defined black markings, and a quiet individual, I placed in a small tin without difficulty. After the feast was over I strolled along the wood's edge in the other direction; I had not gone ten paces when another large adder lay at my feet. It was of a dingy hue, and I did not

perceive it among the dead leaves and dry grass until it commenced to retreat. I essayed to place this one with the other, but the tin would not hold two. I then tried to tie it up in a handkerchief—a feat which I had once managed, by dint of careful manipulation, to perform successfully; but the present specimen was of an unusually truculent disposition, and, my hand slipping, struck me on a finger. As the reptile fell from my hands it bit me again on the knee. I scarcely felt these minute puncturings, but was a little alarmed, for in similar cases of which I had read the sufferers had fainted within a few minutes, and were laid up with fever and delirium for from one to three weeks.

However, recollecting old Gilbert White's advice, I caused a handkerchief to be tied very tightly round the upper part of the arm near the shoulder, and, repairing to a village shop, anointed the wound on the finger (after having sucked it well from the moment of the bite) with salad-oil, drinking also half-a-pint of that nauseous fluid.

I then walked home, a distance of five miles, the hand and arm swelling meanwhile to a huge size. During the next three days this swelling gradually subsided. I was otherwise perfectly well from the moment of the bite till the recovery of the affected member, being able to take long walks. The bite on the knee had no effect whatever, not having been delivered on a fleshy part.

I suffered much more severely on the next two occasions, especially on the last one, when no treatment could be adopted until some time after the accident.

On October 12, 1897, while handling a couple of newly-caught adders at a dealer's establishment, my attention was drawn away from the reptiles, and I received a bite on one of my fingers. This time I did not follow White's advice, which I had heard ridiculed by a doctor as a sort of 'old mother's remedy,' and discarded oil. By the advice of a well-known naturalist I ligatured the finger itself, instead of the higher part of the arm as before. The finger quickly became so black and swollen that the binding had to be loosened.

I walked briskly for half-an-hour, but then began to feel 'queer,' and retired within doors. Violent vomiting then set in, and recurred at intervals for about four hours. Breathing became difficult; my voice lost power, becoming very faint and wheezy; and my whole body was cramped and pained. About two hours after the bite I became quite prostrate; within four or five hours I began to recover rapidly, and on the third day was able to go for a short walk. The arm and hand subsided to their normal size within a week. They had, as on the previous occasion, swollen considerably.

The doctor who attended me this time forbade lively motion for two or three days, lest blood-clots should be released from the affected limb and

enter the body, and caused hot-water bottles to be applied to my feet. His treatment included also the employment of various drugs; but the natures and uses of these it is not for a layman to explain.

It has been ascertained that a man may, by injecting into the system a very minute quantity of snake-venom, and repeating the operation frequently, the quantity being slightly increased on each occasion, render himself proof against the effects of the bite of the species, the venom of which he employed; but I have been told by a high authority on the subject that when a full dose has suddenly entered the circulation, as in the case of a chance bite, the effects of a future bite are not in the least degree mitigated.

On August 31, 1898, I was walking along a hedgerow in a valley not far from Seaford, Sussex, looking for specimens of the harmless grass snake, when I heard a small snake glide swiftly through some long grass into a bush. The hedge being in a low plain, intersected by numerous water-courses—a locality in which I had seen many grass snakes previously, but not a single adder—I supposed that it was a young *natrix*, the latter species frequenting low situations in the neighbourhood of water (in which it delights to bathe, and obtains the frogs and fish on which it subsists), while the adder prefers, as a rule, higher and drier situations. I therefore waited for a few minutes, and then crept quietly to the spot again. Once more I heard, but could not see, the escaping reptile; but with the over-confidence bred of much experience in snake-catching, I made a quick grab through the undergrowth, and managed to seize the snake. On withdrawing it from the herbage I discovered, to my surprise, that I was holding a lively little adder, about a foot long, by the middle of its body, and ere I could drop it its fangs pierced my thumb.

This time there was no one near to assist me, so that the arm had to remain unligatured. I hoped, however, that by vigorous walking I could reach a village a mile away. In a few moments I felt uneasy, and had a presentiment of severe effects to ensue. Before I had walked a hundred yards an unpleasant burning or smarting sensation spread over the skin of my face, surrounding objects swam before my eyes, and I could hardly keep on my feet. I fell down, but rose and tried to continue walking; I fell a second time, and rose again, but could only proceed a few paces; yet a third time I repeated the attempt, but in vain. Being now quite helpless physically, I stretched myself across the road, in order to attract the attention of passers-by—knowing well that a horse will not willingly pass over a prostrate man. I was presently picked up and taken home in a cart.

A doctor who was called in failed to hear my heart beating with a stethoscope, nor could he feel any motion in my pulse. I was, in fact, on

the verge of a fatal collapse of the heart's action. Sight was quite gone for the time being. Yet, though I was incapable of any motion, and apparently insensible, my mind was during all this time clear, and I understood where I was and what had happened; I could also hear fairly distinctly. Brandy was administered in small doses forcibly, in order to stimulate the heart's action. Vomiting was not nearly so violent or prolonged on this occasion as in the case of the previous bite. The hand and arm became swollen in a similar manner, subsiding within a week.

From the above prostrate condition I recovered rapidly; on the third day I was able to crawl half a mile; the next day six miles, though with difficulty, the heart being still very weak; on the fifth day I was so far recovered as to be able to walk twelve miles over hilly country without resting.

I would give the following advice to any one unlucky enough to get bitten by an adder: (1) Enlarge the wound by making two cross-cuts with a sharp knife, and suck hard. The venom does no harm when taken into the stomach; it is only when injected into the circulation that it is injurious. (2) If the wound be on a limb, tie a ligature as tightly as possible above the wound—that is, nearer to the body. (3) Apply to the wound some crystals of permanganate of potash. (4) Drink some sal-volatile, or, if this be not to hand, brandy or whisky may be used, taken in *small doses at intervals*. On no account give large quantities of these latter, in spite of the popular notion to the contrary.

With regard to the common idea that alcohol taken in excess is an antidote to snake-venom, the case of a working-man who was bitten several years ago by an adder in the Warren, near Folkestone, and died in two hours, is worthy of note. The doctor who attended him stated that the man's blood was in a very bad state, owing to excessive indulgence in alcoholic stimulants, and that this was why he succumbed so quickly.

Although a few adult persons have died as the result of adders' bites, such a consequence is not at all usual. A great many cases have occurred

of children being bitten in the hands and feet, and completely recovering from the effects in a few days. When an adult has died, he or she has probably been in very poor health at the time.

I have never been able to observe the effect of a captive adder's bite on small rodents, for the simple reason that these reptiles will not feed in captivity, but will starve until they die. They are by no means of a fierce or malevolent disposition, as a rule, and only use their fangs either to procure food or in self-defence. I have known of four mice (white) which lived for a fortnight in a cage, kept at a high temperature, containing seven adders, without being bitten; the rodents, never having seen snakes before, felt no fear of them, but ran over them, and burrowed in the earth beneath them, provoking only an occasional hiss of displeasure. The death of a bitten mouse is most probably as quick and painless as that of a rat or guinea-pig bitten by a six-foot rattlesnake in the reptile-house at the 'Zoo.'

In conclusion, it may not be amiss to offer a word of warning to those amateurs of snake-keeping, of slight experience, who desire to keep and make pets of adders—I have known of several such. Not only will adders refuse to feed (on this point all observers are in accord), but they cannot be depended upon not to bite their owner. Many specimens will, it is true, after a few days of captivity, lose some of their natural timidity, and even allow themselves to be handled gently; but at any moment a quick motion may alarm them, or some accident may cause them to be roughly handled, when they will bite one in self-defence. Their bite cannot be foreseen, and it cannot be evaded; it is far too swift and sudden. The extreme timidity characteristic of them is owing to the fact that they have in the wild state, especially when young, many enemies in the form of carnivorous animals, such as badgers and hedgehogs, upon whose tough, gristly noses, or thick covering of hair or spines, their tiny fangs are of no avail, and of birds, which kill the reptiles by breaking their backs with a blow from bill or wing. Pheasants in particular relish very young adders.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER III.



WAS wondering in an incurious sort of way what there might be hidden behind the curtain, when the door opened and a stranger made his appearance. 'My customer that is to be,' I remarked to myself as I stood up.

'Mr Simkinson, I believe?' he said, with a bow, as he shut the door and came forward. He spoke with scarcely a trace of a foreign accent.

'The same, sir, at your service,' I replied as I returned his bow.

He was a tall, thin, rather distinguished-looking man, with a keen, resolute face, black deep-set eyes, prominent brows, and a square jaw—evidently a man of marked personality and of considerable force of character.

'Pray be seated, sir,' he said as he waved me to the chair from which I had just risen and drew up the other for himself. Then leaning forward a

little way, with a hand planted on either knee, and, as it were, pinning me to the spot with his piercing eye, he said, 'If I am not mistaken, sir, you are the bearer of certain papers which were entrusted to you yesterday by a young lady who found herself under the disagreeable necessity of having to break her journey at Amiens. Is it not so?'

So taken aback was I that for a few moments all I could do was to sit and stare at him in tongue-tied amazement.

When at length words came to me, all I could find to say was, 'It may or it may not be as you say. But what then?'

'Merely this: that I shall feel obliged by your delivering the papers in question into my hands.'

'In the first place,' I replied, 'I have not admitted my possession of any such papers as you refer to. In the second, supposing them to be in my keeping, what proof have I that you are the person to whom they should be given up? But all this has nothing to do with the object which brought me here. Where is Monsieur Legard, and where?'

'—is the customer he professed to have found for you?' A faint smile lighted up his sallow visage. 'I at once admit that there is no such person, and that, in point of fact, you have been made the victim of a harmless ruse. All we want from you is the packet of papers of which we are well assured you are the bearer, and which, I give you my word of honour, would have been delivered into my hands twenty hours ago, had not our emissary's journey been so unfortunately interrupted.'

As it seemed impossible any longer to doubt that he was the man for whom the packet was intended, I made no more ado, but inserting my hand into the breast-pocket of my under coat, drew it out and handed it to him with a bow.

He took it with another bow, remarking as he did so, 'A thousand thanks. I shall remain your debtor as long as I live.'

A moment later he gave a violent start. 'Ah! the envelope is broken!' he exclaimed. 'Is this your doing, sir?'

His tone had suddenly changed to one of stern inquiry, almost of menace. His heavy brows had come together, and his keen black eyes, like two points of polished steel, were bent full upon me, as if they would fain read me through and through.

'No fingers but my own have touched the packet since it came into my keeping,' I said coldly. The abrupt change in his manner had nettled me.

'Have you perused the contents, may I ask?'

I bowed gravely. 'If you will read the remark on the envelope, which the writer evidently had not time to finish, it will be manifest to you that if I was to deliver the packet to the person for whom it was intended, I had no option save

to open the envelope and seek inside for the missing address—which, however, I failed to find there.'

'But these despatches are of the greatest political importance, and contain secrets which'—

He stopped abruptly, as if afraid of saying more than might be advisable.

'That is no concern of mine,' I brusquely remarked. 'The confounded things were thrust upon me without my consent being asked, and I have already explained my reason for glancing through them.'

I was not sure that he was attending to me.

'Were their contents to become known the Cause might suffer an irreparable blow, and more than one reputation would be irretrievably shattered.' He seemed speaking less to me than to himself.

'I beg to remind you, monsieur, that I am an English gentleman,' I said stiffly, and with that I turned a shoulder towards him.

He got up abruptly, and remarking, 'Your unfortunate action, Mr Simkinson, has placed both yourself and me in a very awkward position,' crossed the room and disappeared behind the curtain of which mention has been made.

Following on this, a minute later, came a confused murmur of several voices, also from behind the curtain, of which, however, I could not distinguish a word. Annoyed at the trick which had been played me, and feeling that the sooner I got away the better, I rose and crossed to the door on tiptoe, but only to find, on trying it, that I was a prisoner. The knowledge came upon me with a shock, and I went back to my chair with a feeling of uneasiness such as I had not experienced before.

By this time the murmur of voices had ceased and all was silent. I was still wondering what might be hidden behind the curtain, when a bell rang somewhere, and on the instant the curtain divided in the middle, the halves being drawn apart by some invisible agency, and then to my startled gaze was revealed a scene which haunted my dreams many a time afterwards.

In the space which the curtain had hidden, and seated on chairs behind a long baize-covered table, were seven men—figures I ought perhaps to call them, seeing that the face of each, from forehead to mouth, was covered with a black crape mask, with orifices to see through, and that the form of each was shrouded in an ample robe of black serge, corded at the waist. The president of this singular assembly, who had three of his colleagues seated on either hand, and who alone wore no mask, was the man with whom I had held the brief colloquy recorded above. In the interim he had donned a robe similar to that of the others, in addition to which he wore a crimson scarf fastened over his left shoulder. On the table in front of him lay

two crossed daggers with long, narrow blades. The room was lighted by half-a-dozen candles stuck into a hoop pendent from the ceiling.

All these particulars photographed themselves on my brain in a few brief seconds. I had started to my feet at the instant the curtain parted, and there I stood, staring like the utterly dumfounded being that I was.

While I stood thus, and before a word was spoken on either side, a strange question put itself unbidden to me.

At the date to which this narrative refers, the name of a certain notorious personage, now some years dead, was very much in the mouths, not of Frenchmen only, but of all interested in public affairs throughout Europe. The person in question, together with his celebrated black charger, had taken a strong hold on the imagination of his compatriots, and at one time it seemed not unlikely that, by means of an audacious *coup d'état*, he might have carried the army with him, and have landed himself on the giddy pinnacle of a dictatorship. In any case, it was a well-ascertained fact that he had confederates in most European capitals, London, of course, included. Was it *his* cause, I now asked myself, which I had unwittingly aided and abetted in acting as the bearer of certain despatches of which the French police had made such a determined attempt to obtain possession? I could scarcely doubt that it was so.

Rising in his place, the president now addressed me, speaking in French, to which language what subsequently passed between us was confined.

'I have explained to my colleagues, monsieur,' he began, 'under what circumstances the packet of which you were the bearer came into your hands (although to more than one of us the facts of the affair were known a number of hours ago), and also for what reason you were led to break open the envelope and peruse the documents enclosed therein. After consideration, the decision at which we have unanimously arrived is, to administer to you the oath of secrecy which is sworn to by every one who affiliates himself to that noble Cause to the furtherance of which we have devoted our lives, and which we are prepared to advocate *à la mort*, should the need for doing so arise. The oath in question once taken, the penalty for an infraction of any of its provisions is death.'

I had resumed my seat by this time. What-

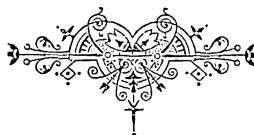
ever perturbation I might feel—and I admit that my knees shook a little under me—I was not going to let it be seen. Clearing my voice after a few moments, I said, 'But supposing I object to take the oath in question, what then?'

'In that case, monsieur, we are likely to have the pleasure of your company for an indefinite time to come. We cannot, of course, compel you to take the oath; but, provided you do not see your way to do so—*eh bien!* here you are, and here you will have to remain. We cannot afford to let you go. You will have to stay as our guest, whether you like it or not, till it suits our purpose to set you at liberty; and when that will be no one here can say.'

Although he spoke in such quiet, level tones, there was that about him which drove home the conviction that he fully meant everything he said.

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! As a married man, with an expectant wife at home, and as a business man with four important appointments booked for the morrow—leaving the future out of question—the prospect might well appal me. And the worst of it was that I saw no possible way of helping myself. I had walked blindfold into the net which had been spread for me, and I must perforce remain where I was till it should please my captors to let me go. I should be missed at home and from my customary haunts, and presently there would be a hue-and-cry after me. But what could the police do in such a case? They would be without the slightest clue to work upon. Doubtless the cabman who had brought me there was in the pay of these masked scoundrels. Although shut up in the heart of London, I was as far removed from help as if cast away in the midst of some tropical desert.

But, on the other hand, all that was asked of me in order to bring about my release was to bind myself by a certain promise; and, however much I might object to doing so in the abstract, the peculiar circumstances in which I found myself surely rendered such a step not merely justifiable, but absolutely imperative on my part. First of all, however, it would be needful to satisfy myself that my taking the oath would involve me in no ulterior responsibilities, nor serve to identify me in any way with the particular cause, whatever its nature might be, with which my jailers seemed so closely identified.



SOME MARVELS OF 1900.

By Mrs J. E. WHITBY.



AMONG the many astonishing sights which the visitor to the Paris Exhibition of 1900 will enjoy, not the least surprising will undoubtedly be those of the Sea Palace and the Maréorama.

The Palace of the Sea—a title, perhaps, a little too suggestive of Margate and the Hall by the Sea—was imagined by Monsieur I. Françon, and will be executed from the plans of the architect Charles Finot, made from the sketches and designs of that well-known painter, Paul Simons. This immense building, capable of holding six thousand persons, will contain a sheet of water nearly four hundred feet long by about two hundred, upon which will manœuvre a fleet of French men-of-war of the cruiser class, and of the latest design. This squadron will go through various evolutions—bombarding the coasts, attacking and defeating imaginary enemies, escaping from destruction, and representing, in short, all the details of a naval combat. It will easily be understood that it is at present impossible to give complete particulars, or, indeed, to explain by what mechanical means these men-of-war, sixteen feet long, will go through their evolutions automatically, pointing their electric projectiles and firing their guns. We must be content, for the time being, to know that the inventor intends to make good use of torpedoes and submarine mines, and that ships will be burnt and sunk in such a way as to give a complete illusion of reality. Thanks to a cleverly managed optical deception, this tank of only a few thousand square yards will present to the onlooker the semblance of a limitless ocean, the eye being so tricked that it will fail to see the opposite crowd of spectators.

But this sheet of water, with its burden of floating war-engines for defence and destruction, will not be the only attraction to be offered to the public. It is, indeed, only the ceiling, so to speak, of a second floor, where greater marvels will be prepared to surprise and astound the sightseer. By means of an ingenious arrangement of the diving-bell the visitor will descend underground to a depth of twenty feet, when he will find himself in an enormous glass receptacle with transparent sides, covered and filled with water. Here he will probably be conscious of the mixed sensations of astonishment, fear, and delight, for he will find himself apparently at the bottom of the sea. All around him will spring, in its fairy-like fantastic form, that luxuriant and unknown vegetation which ocean conceals in its bosom. He

will be able to feast his eyes on forests of beautiful seaweeds; to examine, with a curious mind, madrepores and corals; and to watch and inspect an infinite variety of fish and different forms of marine life. Into the depths of this admirably simulated representation of the real ocean divers will descend from time to time to show their methods of working; and pearl-fishers, specially recruited from the East, will take their graceful plunges as though really at their hazardous task of exploring the sea's profundities for the jewels for beauty's adornment. These subterranean glass galleries will be lighted by electricity, and the spectacle should be both instructive and interesting.

The Maréorama is an extremely ingenious and clever application of the panoramic principle, only in this case the idea is greatly developed and given a certain amount of life. The inventor, Monsieur Hugo d'Alesi, does not content himself with simply showing the sea to the public; he takes them on it, contriving to give a perfect illusion of a sea-voyage, the route taken being *via* Marseilles, Sfax, Naples, Venice, and Constantinople. The visitors—or, rather, the travellers—are to be placed on an extremely well-represented steamer, fitted with masts, rigging, and smoking funnel, and furnished with a crew, who will carry out the imaginary necessary manœuvres. After the supposed bustle of departure, the panoramic pictures will unroll themselves before the supposititious tourists, giving all the impression of passing scenery. These pictures are forty-six feet high and over three thousand feet long. Every one knows the phenomenon that the movement of an object which completely fills the field of vision gives the motionless spectator the impression of personal movement; and it is thus that the Maréorama gives a perfect illusion of a real sea-voyage. Various incidents have been arranged to occur on the imaginary journey to give a still further air of realism. Thus, the steamer will meet and pass through a naval squadron, and there will be many occurrences to impart local colour. At Sfax there is to be an embarkment of the harem of a rich Eastern potentate, with an accompaniment of slaves of various countries; and at Naples the traditional boatmen will come on board to sing and dance the *tarantella*. To make the expedition complete, there is even to be a storm at sea. It only remains for those possessed of more imagination than their fellows to suffer the usual ill consequences of a sea-voyage to render the enterprise exact in all its details.

THE RED FLAG.



'GOOD morning, Jean,' I said, popping up my head above the wall that divided our two gardens. 'How are things to-day?'

My neighbour, never a very amiable fellow at the best of times, scowled at me with more than his usual ferocity, and there was a triumphant note of malice in his voice as, flinging down his spade and crossing his arms over his chest, he came down to the wall, and, pushing his ugly face as near mine as he could conveniently get it, growled out, 'Better to-day, *nom d'un chien*. At last our *sacré* Government has made up its mind. The Territorials are called out, not for the usual thirteen days this time, but for business, everybody says. And, please God, we shall soon show you English and your pig of a Monsieur Chamberlain in particular, that France is ready to avenge the insults offered to her from any quarter. So, Monsieur l'Anglais,' he went on, 'you had better be getting packed, for you won't have much time to waste when all you spies get the order to quit.'

This eloquent Gallic outburst did not in the least astonish me. Fashoda was on every French tongue, though we English residents took good care never to mention the name except in the privacy of our homes or when forced into discussing the matter by some bellicose Frenchman; and Jean, who came under this category, had several times wrangled with me lately over the actions of our respective countries, and the iniquities of the poor Colonial Secretary in particular, who, my neighbour insisted, in common with most French people of his class, was the real author of all the trouble. But I had never seen the good man so very wrathful or so much in earnest before, and I thought I would give him a Roland for his Oliver; though I little knew how it would all end.

Jean was a foreman painter, and lived in a cottage near my house in sunny Brittany, and, like all Bretons, he hated the English with a holy hatred; although, like the rest of his compatriots, he lived chiefly on English money, and it would have been a bad day for them all had the *colonie anglaise* departed or the trade with Southampton ceased. His little strip of garden marched with the end of mine; and every Sunday, after early mass, he did a little perfunctory digging and planting of sundry consumptive-looking flowers and vegetables, accompanied by much chatter, cigarette-making, and expectoration. It was a harmless way of spending Sunday morning, and provided much occupation and amusement for his children, who always spent the weekly Thursday holiday from the village school in scratching up everything that their father had previously planted at the cost of so much tobacco and

natural moisture. Like all good Bretons, he washed but once a week and scorned to go to bed strictly sober. We had been neighbourly enough until Fashoda burst like a thunder-clap over our part of the world; then Jean caught the war fever like the rest of the café politicians, inspired by the halfpenny boulevard rags, and he used to let off steam at me whenever he had the chance. I rather enjoyed drawing him; the wall was a good high one!

'Bah, my friend!' I retorted when his outburst was over, shrugging my shoulders in the most approved French style; 'your Territorial troops are no good; few of them have handled a Lebel rifle as yet. And as to us spies, as you call your benefactors, we should be right enough; why, long before you good Bretons down here had rubbed the cider out of your eyes and discovered that war had begun, an English squadron would be off your coast, and your precious town bombarded or occupied and held to ransom. By the way,' I continued, 'are you a Territorial, friend Jean?' This was too much for my 'friend Jean.' His eyes blazed, and he ground his teeth and hissed out words of weird abuse, of which no language is more redundant than the French. 'Yes, pig-dog of an Englishman, I am a Territorial,' he ended up with, 'and I hope that the good God will give me a chance to make you eat your words, you'— But as I thought this was getting past the argumentative stage, I retired, and was soon out of reach of his deep, booming voice, that continued to roll choice curses out at me as long as I was within earshot. Nor did I hear that delectable sound again or set eyes on his scowling face for many days, and then it was under circumstances that I little dreamed of when I drew him so successfully that Sunday morning 'over the garden wall.'

I heard, indeed, from one of his children that 'papa was a soldier now,' and so I knew that he was one of the thirteen hundred reservists, or 'Territorials,' that had been called out to reinforce the regiment that garrisoned the fort. But beyond that bit of news, which did not interest me, I heard nothing more of him, and I forgot his existence.

Marchand stuck at Fashoda, and we got out our reserve squadron, as all the world knows, and there was much warlike activity and feverish attempts to man the forts and put their coats in a proper state of defence by the French—how unsuccessfully only those on the spot know. War was considered imminent, and the people showed their real feelings towards us foreigners in many acts of rudeness and discourtesy. So the English colony was packed and ready to flit, and kept themselves to their houses and gardens as much as possible.

Some of us, myself amongst the number, who disliked being 'cribbed, cabined, and confined,' and could not give up our country walks and roamings, took to carrying arms as a precaution, for in lonely places bands of men coming home from work were very prone to give vent to their feelings in violent abuse of any solitary Englishman they might come across, and from words to blows and knives is a short step in foreign countries; but the mere sight of a revolver scatters a band of braves like chaff when their attentions become too pressing, and it had been found very useful on more than one occasion. There was no necessity to load—the sight of it was sufficient; but I, being an old soldier and used to firearms, always loaded mine, as I held that it was no good pretending unless you were prepared to shoot if driven to it, and I lived to congratulate myself on my opinion.

Fishing of all and every kind has always been one of the great pleasures of my life; and although streams were wanting in my neighbourhood, and I had consequently to forego the pursuit of the wily trout, I made shift to enjoy myself immensely with the big bass that haunted the swirling waters round the rocky points with which the coast abounded. It was dangerous work, however, unless you were thoroughly acquainted with the ins and outs of the tide and the quickest and safest way of getting out of danger; for at certain spring-tides the water rose no less than forty feet, and came in over the rocks like a racehorse, and it was easy enough to find yourself cut off on a miniature island rapidly being covered by the water, where a few minutes before you were standing at the end of a promontory with a seemingly easy retreat open behind you by which to gain the cliffs. Add to this the rapidity with which the sea would get rough, and the long rollers on quite calm days suddenly assume huge size, and leap up and overwhelm with a torrent of creaming water places high up on the cliffs, to all appearances quite safe and out of their reach, and you have a sport not lightly to be entered upon except by those thoroughly alert and conversant with all its dangers.

One special place there was, remote from the habitations of man, and my favourite spot. It was a narrow promontory some five hundred yards or so long. It stuck out abruptly from the cliffs, and sloped gently downwards toward its extremity. It was used as a rifle-range by the troops in summer, the targets being placed in line across it at the end, about fifty yards from the edge of the cliff. It was grass-grown except the part behind the targets, which, being sea-swept at very high tides, was water-worn and bare rock. The cliff at the end was not high, and all round the base were strewn huge boulders. These were uncovered to a certain extent at low tide, and it was in the churning water round

them that the big fish loved to play. In winter it was a grand place for sport. There was no firing then, and I used to climb down and fish off the boulders for an hour or two until the rising tide drove me up over the cliff, out of reach of its hungry clutches.

French targets, I must explain, are oblong iron frames covered with white linen. The markers sit in a hole in front of them, and after each shot stop up the hole made by the bullet by sticking a piece of white paper over it, signalling its value at the same time. On the range I am describing no stop-butts were used, as there was nothing but the open sea beyond; thus the bullets swept freely down the slope, shaving the edge of the cliff in their flight, and finally losing themselves in the blue sea beyond. There was a little stone shelter on the flank and behind the line of targets. In this a lookout-man was stationed, armed with a small red flag on a slender pole. He generally sat with his back to the wall, dosing in the sun. His duty, I believe, was to wave his flag if anything happened to stop the firing, such as a fishing-boat coming within range, or anything of that kind; but this was of rare occurrence, I imagine; there were too many reefs and treacherous, sunken rocks round the point to make it a fashionable resort for boats. The lookout post was a sinecure, and, in consequence, much in request with those good soldiers of the Republic who preferred repose to their more active duties, and they were not in a minority.

This shooting took place in spring and summer, however; in winter the bleak headland, with its out-of-date fort—curiously placed at its wrong end, and thus useless even had it been of modern design—was deserted. Then the gulls hovered and screamed and fought over some dainty bit of offal, and the cormorants and divers fished in peace, undisturbed by noisy rifle or ringing bugle.

Except the birds, there was not a living thing to be seen as, in the early morning some ten days after my dispute with Jean, I made my way along the range, past the empty holes wherein the markers sat when the targets were up, to a spot in the cliff where I could clamber down what is called by alpine climbers, I believe, a 'chimney,' and thus gain the uncovered rocks below. This chimney was the only difficult part of the business, for, though it was not very high, it had no nice iron staples by which to descend, as in a fashionable and self-respecting chimney, but merely awkward knobs and cracks in the walls, which afforded very poor holding to a man encumbered with rod and basket, and wearing sea-boots and heavy coat, as I of necessity was in winter. However, I got down safely, as usual, and clambered over the rocks until I reached the water's edge.

The sea was calm, as it generally was at low tide, but I knew from its colour, and the sullen roar that came from the reefs and islands far

out, that there was a heavy swell outside, and that I should have to retreat in good time if I did not want to be caught napping and be swept away into the boiling surf that would assuredly replace the present deceitful calm when the tide rose.

I had fished for about an hour, when, to my amazement, I heard a bugle-call sound, and before I had quite grasped the meaning of it, there came ominous whistlings over my head, followed almost instantaneously by the crackling of rifles—not the ordinary shots of a rifle-range, singly, or in twos and threes, but a regular fusillade, as if from machine-guns or magazine-rifles. Who the dickens was it, I wondered, that could be shooting at this time of year? The regiment, I knew, had finished their musketry practice long since; and for the life of me I couldn't think what was the meaning of this bombardment. My conjectures were pleasantly interrupted at this point, however, by a fish taking my bait, and running sixty yards of line straight off the reel in his first rush; he then—— But no, no, I must really refrain. Suffice it to say that I killed him—seven pounds if an ounce.

When I had safely basketed him, I perceived that things were turning out as I had foreseen. The tide was beginning to rise rapidly and drive me up from rock to rock towards the base of the chimney. Indeed, the big rollers were already gaining in size and force, and surged up now and then in close proximity to my legs; and now that the excitement of playing my fish was over, and I could attend to other matters, I began to ask myself what the reader has doubtless been cogitating over ere this—not having a bass to play—how I was to get away over that bullet-swept slope at the top of the cliff. It must be a regular Dargai, I felt. The rattle of musketry was incessant, completely drowning the whistling of the hundreds of slender Lebel bullets that I knew must be combing the air above my head. I saw, too, that the rollers, as the tide came up, would beat against the chimney, even to its very top, and over—not lightly and sprayfully, if I may coin a word, but in sullen rushes of heavy water that no man could withstand; and to be either torn from my hold, swept away and ground into pulp, or riddled with bullet-holes if I attempted to leave the shelter of the cliff, seemed to be my certain and unavoidable fate. The perspiration began to gather, and for the first—no, the second time in my life I found myself in a very tight place indeed. Suddenly I remembered the lookout-man; he was sure to have been posted, whoever and whatever was the cause of the firing. Fool that I was not to have thought of him before, and saved myself some anxious moments. I had nothing to do but put my head up above the edge—and I remembered a chunk of rock that lay there which would just give sufficient cover for that part of me—and hail him,

and all would be well. He would wave his flag and stop the firing, while I walked away out of danger. I smiled as I pictured his astonishment when he heard my shout and saw my head bobbing about on the cliff-edge, and with what vigour he would wave his red rag; and I'd give him a franc as I passed—blowed if I wouldn't!—he would deserve it.

Much relieved in mind, and only slightly anxious as to the size of the stone I counted on as cover for my head when necessity compelled me to stick it up, I leisurely began to pack up my rod; and, all being snug, and the waves having driven me nearly to the foot of the cliff, I began the awkward ascent. The firing was as fierce as ever, and it was not without a certain amount of hesitation that I gripped the edge at last, and drew myself up until my head was above the friendly shelter. As I had anticipated, the piece of rock lying in front a foot or two from my head gave me slight protection; but the bullets were simply raining down the slope, ricochetting and spluttering in all directions and on every side of me; and, in spite of the bit of stone, it was a most jumpy position to be in. I was thankful, however, to see the lookout-man sitting in his shelter away on my left, with his flag on the ground beside him, and his hat tilted over his nose to keep out the sun that streamed on him, late in the year though it was.

I felt certain that I should easily attract his attention in spite of the row from the firing, which I now saw was no ordinary musketry practice, for the range was crammed with men pouring in a continuous and furious fire. There was no marking, of course, and it dawned upon me at once that these men were the 'Territorials' getting rid of their ammunition as fast as they could. I knew the dodge. Every man had sixteen rounds to fire, and the whole lot only half a day to do it in; hence, the only possible way of getting rid of the cartridges was to draw the men up in lines across the range, and tell them to blaze away for all they were worth, no time for aiming or marking being possible. This accounted for the furious storm of balls that swept the air and ground round my devoted head. Although all this takes time in the telling, you may be sure it was not two seconds before I was yelling at the lookout-man; and, to my relief, he at once swept his cap to the back of his head, seized his flag, and, jumping to his feet, gazed wonderingly in my direction. As he caught sight of my head he appeared to grasp the situation at once, and was in the act of raising his flag, when he paused, stared hard at me, and then, to my amazement, deliberately sat down again, took out his tobacco-pouch, and began to roll himself a cigarette. This was too bad. What did the fellow mean? I knew he had both heard and seen me, and his conduct was past understanding. Stay! What was there familiar to

me about the man? Something, I felt sure. Ah! I have it; that peculiar action of his when he rolls his cigarette—where had I seen it before? Great heavens!—Jean! Yes; in spite of his dirty and ill-fitting uniform, his monstrous *kepi* and unshaven chin, I recognised my neighbour Jean; and as I remembered our last meeting and his wild words and rage, the whole horrible business became clear to me. This was his revenge. It was incredible, but it was true. I was to be shot or drowned, whichever I chose, and he would not raise a finger; he would be both blind and deaf. If I was shot, well, I came over the cliff without warning, and before he could raise his flag; if I was drowned, he couldn't see the base of the cliff from his post. He would be held clear of blame, even if the authorities bothered about it at such a time of tension; and as to the consul taking up the matter, why, there was no likelihood of that; the man was a mere figurehead. He would never take action. It was a devilish plot, and a clever one. I must try again. And try I did, all I knew, to get the man to hoist his flag, but without avail; he remained stolid and immovable. There was one thing I didn't do—I didn't beg to him. He shouldn't have that pleasure, and I believe it was just what he was waiting for. Finally I gave up trying; and, finding my fingers cramped and my toes numbed with so long holding to my chimney, I went down it again and rested a while at the bottom and pondered. I thought of many things to aid me, but none were feasible. Even if I could wave a coat or handkerchief above the cliff, the long row of closely-set targets would prevent them seeing from the firing-point. Only Jean would see, and he would gloat. I scanned the sea. Not a boat was to be seen. 'Why should there be?' I groaned. Boats avoided La Garde—that was the name of the point; it was a place of evil ways. No; turn and twist the trouble as I would, I could find no way of escape.

Meanwhile the sea rose higher and higher. Every now and then a wave bigger than the others swept with a roar up to my very feet, and I saw that I should have to take to my chimney very soon if I did not wish to be carried away. I had just grasped the first knob of rock preparatory to beginning to climb, when, above the roar of the surf and the rattle of musketry, I heard the notes of a bugle. Could I believe my ears? Yes, it was the 'Cease fire;' and as the last note died away, the crackling of the rifles followed suit, and in a few seconds the hoarse voice of the sea was all that broke the stillness. Here was an unexpected chance, and one which somehow or other I had never thought of when racking my brains for a way out of the difficulty. Simple as it was, it had never occurred to me that something might happen to stop the firing for a few moments. A few moments! Ah, yes! it might be, and probably was, only but for a minute or

so that the deadly hail would stop; some changing of those firing that would take no time to speak of. And as this fact dawned upon me I began to scramble frantically up the chimney to gain the edge and salvation. Alas for my hopes and my haste! I had barely got half-way up when my basket, as fishing-baskets have a trick of doing, shifted round from my back to my front and got between me and the rock. Here was a pretty fix! I could not let go with either hand in order to right it, and I could not go up higher without serious risk of being pushed out and falling on to the rocks below. I did try; but the basket was big and bulky, made to carry big fish and heavy tackle, and I saw at once that I must go down again and leave it behind next time. Even the descent was a matter of huge difficulty with the great thing hanging in the awkward position it had assumed. It hung like an incubus round my neck, blocking the view below me, so that I couldn't see where to place my feet; and it was simply a matter of luck that I reached the bottom in safety. It did not take me a moment to slip the strap and begin the climb again, quicker than ever this time, as may be imagined; and even as I did a huge wave swept round my legs, nearly carrying me away with the basket, which it whirled off to a watery grave as easily as a cork. Up, up I went; the top was nearly reached, when—oh, horror!—I heard the shrill bugle once more. No need for me to listen to its notes now. I knew well enough what call was beginning to sound, and though I made a frantic and despairing effort to gain the top, it was too late; ere I had grasped the edge above me the storm of bullets had broken out again. My heart fairly died within me; and such was the revulsion of feeling that, for a few seconds, I nearly lost my precarious hold and fell back into the boiling cauldron below. When I recovered myself and looked down with calmness once more, I saw that the supreme moment must soon come when I would be compelled to leave my shelter and make a run—a run into certain death, it seemed. Still, it was better than the cruel waves; for now the tide was running with its full force, and every minute the hungry water rose, leaping up at me, like a dog at a bone hung out of his reach.

Meanwhile what was my enemy doing?—that enemy more pitiless than sea, rocks, or bullets. I drew myself up and looked. Heavens! could I believe my eyes? The man was looking anxiously for my reappearance, it was evident, and when he saw my haggard face his own quite lit up, and he smiled at me cheerfully and encouragingly. Had he relented? I anxiously asked myself. Surely he had. Yet why didn't he hoist the danger-flag? Ah, yes! he was going to do it; he had never really meant murder after all. I saw it all now; his sole intention was to give me a good fright. Well, he had done it, and no mistake. 'There, he has

begun to raise the flag; soon it will flutter above the top of the shelter, and I shall be saved. How slow he is! Go on, man, go on! Merciful powers! what is he doing now? Why is he scowling again so fiercely? Ah, you scoundrel! you double-dyed villain!—the flag drops to earth again. You mean murder after all. This was your fiendish plan, this the cause of your anxiety. You feared your victim had been washed away, and that you would be balked of the pleasure of torturing him with false hopes of safety. Oh, fiend in human shape, villain and?— But madness and despair seized upon me, and I raved and cursed at him until the water found me, and a monstrous wave swept up and covered me to my waist, and tore and hauled at me so that I could barely keep my hold. However, it steadied my nerves, and I ceased my useless ravings; and as it passed and left me I leaned against the side of my chimney to rest and gather strength for the final effort that I saw could be no longer delayed, but must be made before the next big wave came and overwhelmed me. As I rested something in my coat-pocket pressed uncomfortably into my thigh between me and the rock, and I put my hand in to shift it. As I felt it in my hand, and realised what I held, a thrill of joy and hope ran through me. I still possessed a last argument, and one that might be most effectual with Jean; and I drew forth my revolver, the very existence of which I had forgotten. I lost no time in trying its effects. 'Jean,' I shouted, 'look here'—and I pointed the pistol at him as well as I could without exposing myself to the hail of bullets that still swept past—'if you don't hoist your flag at once I'll fire at you; and it's odd if I can't hit you in six shots.'

Jean started as he saw the revolver with my wild face backing it, and as he heard my shout he seized his flag and made as if to hoist it in earnest, but the hatred in him conquered his fear; the distance was long for a pistol, and though he could not get out of danger from me without running into worse from his comrades, he fancied himself fairly safe, which in reality he was, looking at all the circumstances against accurate shooting on my part. So he still defied me; the old mocking smile came back to his lips, and he shouted back at me, 'Die, dog-pig! What do I care for your toy?' and he shook his flag at me in hate and derision. But it was no toy he had to face, but a good English 'Bulldog'; and though I had little chance of hitting him, cramped as I was, and it would not have helped me, either, if I had put a bullet in him, I hoped that I should go near enough to the brute for him to hear the whistle of the ball or the splash of its striking the wall behind him, and so put a holy fear of the next shot into him, and bring him to reason.

So without more words I loosed off at him, and just in time; for as I fired I heard a roar behind me, and I had barely time to drop the pistol and cling to the edge like a limpet, when a crushing

sea reared itself against me, as it seemed, and covered me with a deluge of water and foam. I had an indistinct and momentary vision of Jean's arms in the air, with a splotch of red above, and then the hissing water shut out everything. But, thanks to the purchase afforded by the sides of the chimney, and the good hold the rough edge of the cliff gave, I still clung on; and when the wave had passed I was still in the old place.

When I had got the water out of my eyes I looked for Jean, and behold! he was lying stretched on his face, a few feet in front of his shelter, his hands still grasping his flag, but motionless and still; but yet more wonderful, the firing had ceased, and I saw several officers running down the range towards me. I hastily scrambled up and went towards my late enemy. I say late, because he was as dead as a door-nail, with a bullet through his heart.

There is not much more to be said. I explained that I had been fishing, and had been caught by a wave as I climbed up the cliff to give the signal to the lookout to hoist his flag, and thus let me pass. They at the firing-point knew nothing but the fact that a sharp-eyed officer had seen the red flag wave violently for half a second above the shelter, and, thinking it odd, had used his glasses and seen what he thought was a leg or arm lying on the ground beside the wall. The firing had been instantly stopped; and they came up to see. It was evident that the poor wretch had incautiously exposed himself and got a bullet in his heart for his pains, though they wondered why the wound was in front; and that in his death-spring he had waved the red flag so opportunely for me. It was his own careless fault, and so they buried him without fuss or inquiry, the regimental sawbones not even troubling to probe for the bullet that caused his death. *Luckily for me.*

So they built a bigger shelter and the Republic lost a soldier, while I—well, I lost a basket and fine fish, a revolver, and a neighbour.

LOVE.

O LOVE! what art thou, Love? A glorious Star,
A living Light on its own brightness feeding,
No kindling fires from other sources needing,
That burns and glows across our prison-bar:
A Voice more soft than wandering south winds are;
A mighty Stream on whose full waves, unheeding
Whither its deep, impetuous flow is leading,
The strongest swimmer may be swept too far!

Thou art the only Angel left on Earth;
The whole of Heaven in a melting sigh;
The one bright thing that knows not how to die.
Immortal seal to Man of his high birth,
Thou art the life of Life, its pulse, its breath;
Thou art the Dream that waits us beyond Death!

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



POACHERS AND THEIR WAYS.

GENERALLY speaking, the poacher is a cowardly ruffian, who, too lazy to work, prefers stealing to earning an honest livelihood. But there are exceptions. There is the country-bred man whose innate love of sport has started him on the illegal pursuit of game, also the old Highlander who believes there is no shame attached to stalking a deer; for both of these the genuine sportsman must feel sympathy.

The successful professional poacher is a fellow of keen observation. He has a complete comprehension of animated nature, of woodcraft, and of how changes in the weather affect the customs of his quarry. Discarding the gun, which has the disadvantage, unless it be an air one, of betraying his presence, he chiefly relies on nets and his dog. The breed of dog—commonly a cross between a greyhound and a collie—is called 'lurcher.' In addition to having the speed of the one parent and the 'nose' and intelligence of the other, a lurcher has more stamina than a greyhound, never gives tongue, and will usually retrieve. In frosty weather a lurcher bred from a staghound is preferred, as it has harder feet than a dog of the greyhound breed. The terrier lurcher, being apt to bark, is of little use to the poacher. The training of these dogs is of a very high order, as upon it almost entirely depends the poacher's success, and often his safety. Here is an actual incident. A poacher on the hunt for hares had set his net at the gate of the field. Motioning his dog to range, he was surprised at its refusing to do so. Growling, it crouched at its master's feet. His suspicions aroused, the poacher, glancing back, discerned the burly figures of two keepers stealthily creeping up behind the hedge at the opposite side of the road. Seeing they were observed, the keepers sprang over the hedge; but, thanks to the timely warning of his lurcher, the poacher, making good use of his legs, effected his escape minus his poaching implements. On account of the use to which the lurcher is put it is looked upon with reproach,

yet this creature is often a perfect model of animal beauty, and in intelligence and capability is inferior to no other breed.

To thoroughly acquaint himself with the estate which he intends to work is the poacher's first move. A common way of getting information is through an accomplice. This man, who is never seen in the company of poachers, will quietly stroll, sometimes reading a book, through the fields. He marks where the coveys settle for the night, where the hares feed, draws diagrams of the fields—showing positions of gates and other egresses—and, what is even of more importance than all these, learns exactly the rounds and movements of the keeper. Many are the devices practised to get the keeper out of the way. A favourite plan is for one of a gang of poachers to fire several shots some distance from the place where the raid is to be made. This attracts the keepers to that portion of the estate, leaving the poachers hard at work netting hares or rabbits. Another dodge is to put a hare in a snare, which will be seen by the keeper on his evening round, and cause him to watch for the poachers' return. Of course they never come back. A case of this sort lately took place. As soon as the poachers saw the keepers secrete themselves beside the fake, they went straight to a field of Swedish turnips, out of which they netted nine hares.

Many stories are told of how gamekeepers have been outwitted. The following incident which took place in Selkirkshire will show how crafty the poacher can be. Three poachers, ferreting rabbits, were surprised by a keeper and a county policeman. The former succeeded in capturing one of the men, while the other two bolted through the wood, pursued by the constable. Suddenly the captive appeared to be very ill, and exclaiming, 'Oh, my heart!' sank in a fainting condition on the ground. Alarmed at the state of his prisoner, the keeper went in search of water with which to revive the suffering poacher; but on returning he found that the sick Nimrod had made a rapid recovery and taken advantage of his captor's short absence

to escape. But sometimes poachers are tricked by the gamekeeper. A common though somewhat unscrupulous ruse is for the keeper to put a rabbit in the snare, then, hiding himself, to await the return of the poacher, whom he thus captures red-handed.

Moonlight nights are avoided by the poacher, not only on account of his being easily seen, but because netting hares on a clear night is dangerous, for if these creatures have once been in contact with a net they will on seeing it again immediately commence squealing. Hares pay the poacher best, and this is his method of capturing them. As soon as a field of corn—barley with young grass being preferred—is cut the poacher gets to work. Over the outside of the centre bar of the gate he hangs the net, which extends the whole length between the posts, the lower part resting loosely on the ground. The net is kept in position by two small stones. Ranging the field, the lurcher drives the hare into the net, which, carried away from its light supports, completely entangles the animal. The net is reset, and so on until all the hares are taken from the enclosure. In the writer's recollection so many as eleven hares were in this manner taken from one field by two men with a couple of dogs. Purse-nets and snares are also used. These are placed at tunnels or openings in hedges through which the hare is accustomed to run. Purse-netting, which is a very deadly affair, has the great advantage of rendering the poacher independent of assistance—even of that of a dog. Hanging these small nets over all the egresses, he, entering the covert, drives out the hares, which, bolting through their customary runs, are caught in the nets. In ferreting rabbits purse-nets are much used. As rabbits, unlike hares, rarely squeal when caught in the net, this is a silent and successful mode. A class of vagabonds not generally suspected of poaching are pedlars, who—with a ferret and a purse-net in their pocket—sell bootlaces and rustic-made baskets. In their impudence lies their success. They inquire at the keeper's cottage whether he is at home; if he is, permission to gather a few young ferns to place in the baskets is asked. Leave obtained, the rest is simple. If the keeper happens to be from home so much the easier for the pedlar.

The wholesale way of catching rabbits is by means of a long net from seventy to one hundred and twenty yards in length, and two feet in height. Having noted the part outside a wood where rabbits feed in the evening, the poachers, choosing a warm, dry, dark night, when rabbits feed a long way out from their burrows, take off their boots, and noiselessly and quickly, with slight stakes or pins, set the net between the feeding-ground and the covert. One of the men, making a *détour*, gets in front of the rabbits, which, rushing homewards, are caught in the diamond-meshed net. In this manner as many

as two or three hundred rabbits are taken in a single night. One night last autumn one hundred and forty couple were taken from a well-known Scottish estate. As an illustration of the boldness of poachers, the same gang during the same week took a hundred couple from another property almost adjoining the estate from which they had taken the first haul.

Of game proper, pheasants pay the poacher best. A silent and effective way of catching these birds is by holding lighted brimstone beneath them whilst roosting. Stupefied with the fumes, they drop helplessly to the ground. One of the most deadly but cruel tricks is the following: Dried peas or beans are placed in warm water until they are soft enough to be easily pierced with a needle. Then through the pea is threaded a bristle, such as is used by shoemakers, the ends of which project about a quarter of an inch. In order to attract the pheasants the poacher will sprinkle *bond fide* peas for two or three mornings. Then he substitutes his lethal bait, which either at once chokes the birds or sets up such a violent irritation in the gullet that they are picked up from under the hedges in a half-dead condition. Partridges are taken with a net about forty-five yards long and fourteen feet in breadth, a cord running through the topmost meshes, while attached to the lower part are light lead weights. The net is usually made of silk, which makes little noise when being dragged over the ground, and it can, when not in use, be compressed into very little bulk. Having accurately marked where the partridges have settled for the night, as soon as it is dark the net is dragged over that ground by two men. On feeling the rearmost edge of the net the birds attempt to fly, but the net is promptly dropped and the whole covey captured. Grouse are taken in like fashion. The poacher's method of catching wild-duck is very simple: ordinary fishing-hooks, baited with tripe or a slice of onion, are fastened by a piece of salmon-gut about a foot in length to small stakes beside the loch.

Such are the ordinary methods of the poacher. Of course the gun is also used; only, however, when it can be fired without danger of being heard. But poaching has been reduced to a woodland science, and the successful poacher is generally a specialist. If his specialty be hares, he will cut open the insides of his captures in order to find out on what they feed; he will watch evening after evening their customary paths; he knows exactly the height to set the snare, as hares jump higher in wet than in dry weather; he can tell, when the frosty season comes, where the hares from the hills are likely to be found; and what he does not know about their habits is not worth learning. This type of poacher usually works with only the assistance of his lurcher, knowing well the unreliability of his genus; for the ordinary prowler is wanting in astuteness,

and his drinking habits make him babble secrets which lead to his own and his companions' apprehension.

When surprised, the rule of the poacher is to give the whistle of alarm and then to run to the centre of the field. There is thus no chance of mistaking an accomplice for a keeper; and, also, the force against them is at once seen. Disposing of game is usually the poacher's greatest difficulty. In this, the man who poaches on seashore estates has a distinct advantage over his rural brother. He sails his boat along the coast until a favourable spot presents itself alike for poaching and for sending away his plunder. Generally watching the land entrances, the keepers leave the approaches from the sea unguarded.

With regard to the recent trials of bloodhounds on the Yorkshire moors, which were witnessed by many gentlemen interested in the preserva-

tion of game, a word as to the ability of the bloodhound as a tracker of poachers may not be out of place. In many quarters there exists a superstition that when the hound has brought his human quarry to bay he will attack him. This is entirely wrong. The animal is quite content on overtaking his quarry to bark until assistance comes. In the busy thoroughfares of a town the scent of a criminal must either be obliterated or mixed with other scent; but in the country a well-trained bloodhound should have little difficulty in tracing his fugitive. If constables, in certain districts where poaching is rife, were allowed to keep one of these man-hunting dogs there is little doubt that poaching would rapidly decrease. The mere fact that a bloodhound was kept in the district would deter many men from embarking upon a 'fur' or 'feather' expedition.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER IV.—MY COUSIN KITTY.



HAD fired my mine: the explosion was quick to follow. With another ejaculation, that sounded not too polite, Kennett took a step towards me.

'A Hanoverian jackal!' he cried. 'And here! Is it a joke, Hollingworth? But, joke or none, Kynaston shan't have *that*, by heaven!'—and therewith, before I could prevent him, he had leaned forward and seized the letter.

Now, I had not reckoned upon violence, and at the best of times my temper needs no spur. Jumping up, I confronted him.

But Sir Charles interposed. 'What's this, Kennett?' he demanded sharply. 'Surely you forget that Mr Holroyd is my guest and kinsman?'

'But the whole plan will be ruined if he'—He broke off suddenly, reminded by a look from Sir Charles that his tongue was wagging too freely. 'I mean—I am thinking of you, Hollingworth—that it's as good as signing your death-warrant to let Kynaston know your whereabouts. And this gentleman'—

'Is, as I have said, my kinsman.'

'And also Lord Kynaston's secretary, as he boasts. What assurance have we'—

Hitherto I had perforce been silent, but here I thought it proper to interrupt him. 'That, sir, rests between Sir Charles and me,' said I, meeting his eye fairly. 'He asks no assurance that I am neither spy nor informer: I hope he needs none. The only danger to him, in this case, can lie in the mention of the Dower-house—and of that Mr Kennett must be the best judge.'

'I am glad that you allow it, sir,' said he, sneering.

'As for the letter,' I went on, turning to my

host, 'you have heard it read. I leave it to you, Sir Charles, to decide what is to be done.'

At this point we were all on our feet, and, for one, I had no idea what the upshot would be. That there was something beneath the surface was, of course, quite evident: Kennett's heat could not be explained otherwise. But it was also evident that the issue depended not upon him, but upon Sir Charles. The latter did not keep us in suspense. He had recovered his old air of cheerful urbanity, and his attitude was in no doubt.

'Here's an ado about nothing!' cried he. 'Certainly I'll take the letter. Why not? Give it to Kitty, Kennett, and let us be off—we've delayed too long already.'

The other still hesitated. 'Not until we know'—

'Nonsense, man! I'll go bail myself for Mr Holroyd, if you like.' His tone was more pressing, and Kennett gave in, albeit with not too good a grace. 'That's right! I don't promise to deliver it in person, George, but you have my word that 'twill reach my lord. . . . Ready, Kitty? To horse, then!'

Apparently he was now eager to be gone, and allowed Kennett no time for further objections, and himself little for adieux. But at the last moment, his companion having preceded him, he turned back for a word with me.

'Remember, cousin, my liberty is in your hands—perhaps even more,' he said, clapping me familiarly on the left shoulder. 'I trust you most fully. You will await my return?'

'Or the chaise,' said I.

'Oh, I'll be back before it comes. I may be to-night—at the latest to-morrow. Good-bye till then!'

Thus was the situation saved, and I was left alone with the ladies. I may confess that, looking back at the events of the twenty-four hours, I was not altogether satisfied. I had arrived at an explanation with my host, indeed; it had passed not badly; but, as the result, I had formed some conclusions that gave food for the gravest thought. These you shall hear in time; for the present, there was nothing for it but to make the best of the circumstances. And, reflections apart, the duty was not likely to be other than agreeable.

Kitty had attended her father to the door, and her hair was powdered with white flakes when she returned to the room. For some reason, she seemed to be in wonderful spirits.

'Snowing again!' she said. 'Cousin George, acknowledge you are better indoors on such an evening, after all!'

'How can I deny it? But Sir Charles will have a cold journey. You must be greatly concerned for him sometimes, in these absences?'

She took me up briskly. 'Because of the weather, you mean?' she asked.

'I was thinking rather of his safety,' said I. 'There may be people in Bath who have known him, and surely it is not too wise to run such a risk of being recognised?'

'When he has a purpose in view, 'tis the last thing he has ever considered. Of course I am anxious, as'—laughing a little—'a soldier's wife or daughter may be anxious. I have been educated so, Cousin George! Besides, he never ventures by day.'

So he was in the habit of going to Bath!

'Still, if only for your sake'—

'For my sake, be sure he will omit no precaution that is possible,' she said softly; and then, as if the subject were ended: 'But now Mrs Herbert will brew us a dish of tea. After that, sir, you must tell me of London—to think that I have never seen Hyde Park and the Mall!—until 'tis time to send the invalid to bed!'

We were not yet, however, finished with serious matters; for when good Mrs Herbert went off presently to do her ward's bidding, she seized the chance to recur to our overnight meeting.

'I have to thank you for your promise,' she said, not without embarrassment. 'I saw that you were surprised by the request'—

'Somewhat,' I admitted.

'I did it for the best. I cannot tell you why, but I forbore to mention it last night—there were certain reasons—and afterwards I thought 'twould be easier for da! if he knew nothing about it. You would not understand, but'—

On the contrary, I believe that I did understand—enough, at the least, to be certain of her motives. And there could be no question on whose side lay the balance of gratitude due.

'But, all the more, the responsibility is mine,' she continued; 'wherefore, Cousin George, I have another promise to beg of you.'

'A score if they are as easy to grant,' said I.

'You must hear it first.' She paused for a moment or two, puckering her brows. Then: 'I want you to keep what you saw a secret from everybody—not only that, but whatever you may see or hear while you are in this house. 'Tis much to ask, but otherwise—well, for me, I should feel that I had been in the wrong, and never cease to blame myself if anything untoward befell.'

Now, I was not a free agent; I had my duties to my office and the king; and although I could not foresee all that such a promise might involve, I had already realised that I was wading in deep waters. Yet a feeling new to me was pleading my cousin's cause against reason and conscience, and I am not sure that I could have refused even had I known what the morrow was to reveal. Her hand was on my sleeve, her eyes held mine, and—and, in a word, I promised. Rightly or wrongly, I promised. To this day I cannot decide whether it was rightly or wrongly.

Then the tea was brought in, the curtains were drawn and the candles lit, and we disposed ourselves, with an exceeding content on my part, for a cosy evening around the fire. That evening remains in my memory as one of the most happy and pleasant of a long life, and will so remain (please God) while recollection lasts. I am not to write here of that which above all else made it so. Let it suffice to say that betwixt Kitty and myself the talk was that of dear friends who had long been separated. In a hundred ways, as we conversed without constraint of many things—my own career, her convent schooldays and later wanderings with Sir Charles—the girl revealed the sweet and gracious nature that was hers. To me the ending came all too soon. Every woman is a tyrant *in posse*, wanting but opportunity; Mrs Herbert, who had hitherto proved herself the discreetest of dragons, was pleased to remember my state of health, and, backed by my cousin, packed me upstairs at an hour ridiculously early. Against the pair my protests and appeals availed me nothing.

Nevertheless, as you may imagine, I did not go to bed at once. I had now leisure to think out my position, and did so fairly over a pipe of Sir Charles's tobacco. At the best, I could not hide from myself that the result did not make for comfort.

To be fully understood I must recall the circumstances of the time. The war with France was raging on two continents: we had just passed through the bitterness of a great parliamentary struggle for office. Now, for some months, and particularly since a rumour concerning the king's health had gone abroad, we had been receiving warnings from our foreign agents of activity among the exiled Jacobites; and the latest reports—they were no other, indeed,

than those which I had been carrying to my lord when I was intercepted by the pads—had brought us news still more serious. From divers sources we had heard of the simultaneous departure from their wonted abodes of many noted malcontents, and their disappearance beyond the ken of our spies. The same intelligence came from Rome and Ratisbon, from Geneva and The Hague; the movement was too widespread to be accidental; and, in short, it could leave one in no doubt that a new conspiracy was on foot.

In itself, this was perhaps not altogether unexpected; for my lord, in whose charge lay such affairs, was the last man to be taken unawares—and his experience was great. Nor was it a matter to be feared overmuch. Thanks to our recent victories by sea and land, the whole nation was behind the Government and the throne: there remained not even the embers of Jacobitism to be fanned into flame. An attempt, if it were made, could but cause annoyance and trouble—more or less. Wishing neither, 'twas our present object to prevent rather than to punish.

And now? Well, I had left London with information that might guide my lord; and here, by a marvellous chance, I had fallen on certain discoveries that were infinitely more important. For I did not blink the truth. Sir Charles Hollingworth was one of the chiefs of the Jacobite interest, and his presence in England (that alone) was significant. But I had been led to suspicion by other facts, and especially by the scene that I had witnessed from the stair. I have described it: the inference that I was forced to draw from it may be guessed. There could be but one.

You will now perceive my dilemma. On the one side were the claims of gratitude and kinship, and perhaps a stronger feeling—above all, my promises to Kitty. So far, at least, my hands were tied. On the other side, to do and say nothing was to be a traitor to my principles and the bread that I ate. Was ever man of honour caught in such a plight?

Consider as I might, I could see no way of escape. Every step had its difficulties; but as the situation was like to become the more intolerable the longer I stayed at the Dower-house, I prayed that the chaise from Bath might arrive before Sir Charles returned. This was in cold blood; I doubted if I should think the same under the witching eyes of Miss Kitty.

In the end, having wisely decided that my future course must depend upon events, I gave up the problem and went to bed; and, notwithstanding my troubles, I slept long and soundly.

The next morning found me eager for action. My wound was almost healed and the pain gone, and otherwise I was quite myself again. When I descended to breakfast, however, 'twas to learn

that nothing had happened in the interval. No carriage had come for me, and Sir Charles was still absent.

The forenoon tasked my patience to the utmost. Probably I should have felt the tedium less had I seen more of Kitty, but apparently she had other duties; Mrs Herbert, among her good qualities, had not the gift of conversation; and I spent my time in wandering from fireside to window and back, and in hoping vainly for something to turn up. At length, as the last resource, I resolved to venture out and have a look at the surroundings of the Dower-house. It might be of service later.

Presently, then, I made my way into the open air. Snow was on the ground to the depth of a couple of inches, and in the clear, frosty atmosphere and the pall of white, everything stood out with a marvellous distinctness and beauty. The house was a quaint, many-cornered, ivy-covered building, of no great size; and on three sides was a large garden, bounded by wood—that, as I was to discover, of the park of Langbridge Hall, which itself was half a mile distant. On the fourth side—in front, to be precise—the trees grew close up to the walls, entirely screening the house, and thence a winding avenue led to a quiet byroad. What struck me chiefly was the solitude of the place. I knew that, besides the ladies and myself, the only occupants were two serving-maids; and, for certain purposes, no better spot could have been chosen for the refuge of a returned exile and conspirator.

My temper, which had been somewhat improved by this diversion, was sorely tried as the morning passed without incident. Kitty remaining invisible, all my wishes were for the appearance of the chaise. It came not; and, provided that my lord had received the letter, I could not understand the delay. Lacking other occupation, I had no peace from the old doubts.

But even the longest lane has its turning, and in due time (to change the metaphor) the knot was cut—and that, too, in a manner most surprising. This was early in the afternoon. The midday repast was over; Kitty, avoiding my reproachful eyes, had again disappeared; Mrs Herbert was dozing by the fire; and, for me, I was about to resign myself to despair, when, looking up, I happened to perceive a slight, lissome figure in a scarlet cloak passing the parlour window towards the garden. In a moment I had taken my resolution. Slipping out, I donned my own cloak and my hat, and followed.

Although I had lost not more than a minute or two, the red-cloaked figure was not in sight when I gained the garden. But this mattered little; her course was plainly marked on the snow-mantled ground. Now, I had no purpose save to overtake my cousin—none, assuredly, to spy upon her—as I pursued her track. It went straight across the garden to the boundaries of

Langbridge park ; and there, if I had thought, I might have paused ; but as I cut through the fringe of coppice that divided the two, I had a glimpse of scarlet a hundred yards in front, and hurried on.

The park dipped gradually to the banks of a little stream, and hereabouts was fairly well wooded ; and thus Kitty was again hidden from my view until I was within thirty yards. Then, rounding a clump of holly, I saw her just as she stepped upon a narrow foot-bridge which spanned the water. And, at the same instant, I saw something else that caused me to pull up dead.

Baldly, 'twas this. A man approached from the other side of the stream, and met her in the middle of the bridge. By his salutation, the encounter was no chance one.

My first impulse was to retire incontinently, with what feelings it may be wiser to leave untold. I had turned to do so, indeed ; but a second glance over my shoulder sent me instead to the shelter of the holly-bush. For it showed me that the man's appearance was not unfamiliar ;

that, unless my eyes deceived me, he was no other than the cavalier who had been the central figure in the strange episode in the hall of the Dover-house !

But this was not all. You will remember my overpowering desire to see his face, and how it had been frustrated. Well, in that backward glance I had seen it at last—and instantly the inclination for retreat had gone, and I was standing behind the holly with beating pulses, and the premonition that I was on the verge of a momentous discovery. Every feature was known to me, but the knowledge was not that of a personal contact. For a second the truth eluded me. 'Twas only for a second. Then the recollection of a score of portraits and medallions rose to my mind, and—

And, all at once, I realised that here in the heart of England, within a few yards of me, was the arch-plotter against the peace of the realm—he whose courage and daring had, thirteen or fourteen years back, shaken the throne to its foundations—Charles Edward Stuart himself.

MID-OCEAN SHELLS.

By C. PARKINSON, F.G.S.



THE glare of a tropical sun beating down with pitiless rays upon the glassy sea drives most pelagic life from the surface of the water to a depth of several feet until the heat of the day has passed away. The fiery orb then dips beneath the horizon, revealing for an instant those remarkable green rays which are seldom or never seen outside the region of the torrid zone. And then the sea-creatures, impelled by a certain instinct, once more seek the surface, to hold grand carnival throughout the wondrous brilliance of the starry night. As the light of day fades rapidly away—there is little twilight near to the equator—myriads of spheroid bodies, like so many bits of scintillating glass, career madly in the translucent ocean, the gyrations being distinctly visible to the naked eyes from the deck of a passing ship. The observation of such infinitesimal things alone renders a prolonged calm at sea endurable to those confined on board a sailing-ship ; for there is grace, poetry, and a living interest attached to everything that moves in the vast abyss of ocean space ; and the beauty of the organisms surpasses the creations of the wildest imagination. The glittering particles of animated matter are, in reality, floating shells which belong to the 'wing-footed' group of the mollusca ; they are distributed chiefly in mid-ocean, and are, consequently, little known in the tidal regions of the sea-coasts. They occur, in

varying form, in every clime. Nansen, when imprisoned in the Arctic seas, cut holes in the ice in order to obtain a series of the northerly species, such as *Clio borealis*, and the writer has collected many kinds in every latitude, from Kerguelen in the south to the region of the Western Isles in the northern hemisphere.

The Indian Ocean, perhaps, has the maximum development of the Pteropoda, or wing-footed mollusca ; and there they swim in countless millions at the fall of eventide. The strange thing is that a regular succession of different species rise in the water with unfailing exactness, following each other in orderly sequence from sunset far into the darkness of a tropical night. Thus, at about six o'clock a shell known to conchologists as *Cavolinia trispinosa* appears at the surface, followed an hour later by *Cleodora tridentata*. A few of each may possibly be taken together during the day, but the greater number rise separately towards night. We have only to improvise the bag of a surface-trawl in order to capture hundreds of these vivacious little creatures for a closer examination on board ship. A bucket of sea-water forms a handy receptacle, in which the attractive little animals pursue their interrupted evolutions once again. A specimen of *Cavolinia*, if placed in a glass trough such as is used for living objects on the microscopic stand, presents a singularly beautiful organism as it swims to and fro in the water. The semi-

opaque valves—barely the third of an inch in diameter—are joined together into a single shell, with slits for the head, feelers, and the lateral 'wing-feet,' used in fan-like propulsion. Each shell resembles a miniature rounded purse, coloured with milky-white, tortoise-shell hues and a rim of deep crimson. The characteristic spines project before and behind. As the fleshy head of a mollusc appears through the terminal slit, the long tongue can be seen ejected at intervals in search of particles of food. In the meantime the propellers at either side wave vigorously with incessant and rapid action. The shapes and sizes of these floating shells vary considerably; but the movements of the one kind serve to illustrate those of other genera. *Cleodora tridentata*, which appears later, has a more rounded shell, about the size of a large pea, mottled brown and yellow in colour, with a spine recurved over the orifice. The shell is remarkably striated. Another group have simple conical tubes, pointed at the apex, with circular or oval vent common to the head and wings. Some disport themselves without any shells at all, the bodies resembling compact fragments of india-rubber, with lobes for the wings, and but slight indications of the head.

A very beautiful rose-coloured pteropod, *Styliola rosea*, found in profusion by day in a latitude four hundred miles south of Madagascar, deserves more than a passing comment, not only for the microscopic perfection of the fully-developed creature, but also for the wonderful series illustrative of the embryonic and larval stages that we were able to cultivate in our cabin. The fragile shell is needle-shaped, barely the sixteenth part of an inch at the aperture, and the sixth of an inch in length, tapering to the sharpest point, which readily pierces the hand. This shell is quite transparent, so that every detail of the internal structure can be duly studied with a lens. The mollusc is visible within the tube, coloured a delicate rose-pink from the lowest extremity to the wings and mouth. The incipient ovules are clearly seen, together with the circulatory and digestive organs. On a specimen being placed in water beneath the microscope, the wing-feet slowly expand and the mouth is extended. In full animation this tiny mollusc constitutes a beautiful object, well-nigh impossible to describe in the elegance of its movements. The embryo—which took a week to surely identify—is a free-swimming body, propelled by cilia at the rim of a small cup. This hard and glassy substance contains the embryo, to be detected as a pink nucleus within, capable of slight motion independent of the theca, or cup. In the observation of upwards of twenty specimens, the gradual elongation of the cup into a spinous tube was carefully noted, the larval embryo giving evidences of a corresponding development until the perfect mollusc duly appeared. These transitions proved

of surpassing interest to officers and passengers alike, even where the knowledge and appliances of a *Challenger* Expedition were lacking. Off the Cape of Good Hope the net was simply laden with another species of *Styliola*, with the sheath upwards of an inch in length, but extremely fragile and finely pointed as a needle. It contained an animal, with the body partly yellow and partly green, and of such vitality that it could swim minus the glassy shell, disporting with uncovered body for several hours in a glass of sea-water.

Nothing is more remarkable in the region of the Cape of Good Hope than the sudden change in the temperature of the surface-water on the east and west sides of the African continent. Simon's Bay, for example, has decidedly warm waters, due to the influences of the Mozambique and Agulhas currents passing south from the tropics. Table Bay, on the contrary, is icy cold, on account of the antarctic stream which lowers the temperature of the surface-water far into the tropical seas on the west side of Africa, until it is finally lost beneath the force of the conflicting equatorial current. The general effect of this is that a definite break occurs in the surface fauna of the sea in the vicinity of the Cape; quite different mollusca thrive in close proximity, divided only by the hot and cold streams from each other. Thus, we left the Pteropoda of the Indian Ocean behind as the ship passed into the South Atlantic. A larger and wonderfully brittle shell—*Cuvieria columnella*—appeared in the net, generally with one valve wanting. The well-known purple sea-snail revels in the colder currents, and attains larger dimensions than in the tropical seas. The colour of the shell is of the richest violet, the purple fluid emitted by the mollusc giving the scientific name to the animal; it yielded the Tyrian dye of the Roman era. The contrivance which serves as a float is a veritable curiosity, consisting of many air-chambers welded together like the bubbles of froth. It can be inflated at will, according as the creature desires to sink or to swim. The apparatus also serves as a raft for the support of the ova as well as for the buoyancy of the mollusc. Another allied shell has a brown coloration, and is much smaller in size. In these cooler streams we have taken another very beautiful gasteropod—*Atlanta peroni*—extremely fragile, transparent, and almost microscopic in the dimensions of the compressed, spirally-coiled habitation. A lens is necessary to appreciate the exquisite violet hues of the animal contained within the glassy texture of the shell. The action of the dorsal gills presents a very perfect example of water circulation, and the food particles can be followed from the inflowing current of the mouth to the intestinal cavity, owing to the wonderful transparency of the organism.

Our net was for several months towed by the

side of the ship all day long and far into the night, whenever the rate of sailing did not exceed four knots to the hour. It was hauled on to the poop every hour or so, and many a wondrous medley was turned out from the bag upon the wheel-box, the great haul of the day being after dinner at 7 P.M. Nobody on board had a greater interest in the proceedings than the captain, who was solely responsible for the contrivance of the trawl itself, and, moreover, placed every facility at our disposal throughout the voyage. In striking contrast to the trim and vivacious Pteropoda floating in mid-ocean are the brilliant mollusca of the Nudibranchiata, or naked-gilled sub-order. Most of the 'wing-footed' group develop the shell during the process of growth; the Nudibranchiata, on the contrary, frequently possess shells in the larval stage of existence, which are lost before the animal reaches maturity, although the mantle is sometimes strengthened with spicula embedded therein. The soft-bodied creatures assume every variety of form and colour, crowned by, or bordered by, rows of feathery gills of most exquisite hue. A species of *Glaucus* is characteristic of mid-ocean. The elongated body is brilliant in the strong contrast of blue and black stripes, the blue-fringed gills are borne on two pairs of lateral lobes, and the head possesses a pair of feelers. Another species of naked-gilled mollusc is confined entirely to the region of the gulf-weed, on which it thrives, and has also assumed the colour of the vegetation in a corresponding tone of yellow-brown. Another free swimmer—some three inches in length—has colours of yellow and gold, with arborescent gills tipped with every shade of orange and deep red, but sluggish in movement, after the manner of all its kind. In certain latitudes the beauty and variety of the creatures contained in the net became such as to cause quite an excitement when every fresh haul was made. One could not determine a tenth part of the captures, which were rarely the same two days in succession.

The cuttle-fishes and numerous other Cephalopoda, or 'head walkers,' abound in every latitude, a class of the mollusca yielding to none in interest. One day, when the ship lay in her course some three hundred miles north of St Helena, the net contained several round bodies with purple covers—precisely like ripe sloes, the fruit of the blackthorn, in shape, size, and colour. Towards evening the young cuttle-fishes swarmed at the surface of the water, swimming to and fro at headlong speed. A basin of seawater, with half-a-dozen young ones careering madly around, proved quite an attractive exhibition. The eight short feelers encircled the head, and the long pair of tentacular arms could be retracted within the body at will. The search after food particles appears to be the main effort in life, and the rapid movements through the water, reversible in a second, are evidently dependent upon

the siphonal contrivances for the expansion of the fluid circulated through the body. The immature cuttle-fish changes its shape in a marvellous manner; sometimes it is inflated into a round ball, reverting instantaneously into the normal oval shape.

The changes of colour in most Cephalopods are very singular. A series of globules appear to rise to the exterior tissues beneath the skin. They coalesce like oil or blood corpuscles, giving a rosy hue to the entire body, like a sudden blush. These globules in turn give place to another series of slate-colour, brown, or varied tint, as the case may be; and thus transition follows transition in subtle gradation of tone. The contents of the ink-bag, which can be ejected in order to discolour the surrounding water, are distinct from the colours of the pigment-cells referred to above. A slight dissection reveals the 'cuttle bone,' the ink-bag, the jaws within the mouth, the great goggle eyes, and, above all, the tenacity of the suckers.

Very frequently we captured the partially-coiled shells known by sailors as 'rams' horns,' of pearly whiteness. It was a long time before we identified it as the internal chambered shell of a decapod cuttle-fish, strongly suggestive of a *Nautilus*. The cast-off shells are common enough at sea, the mollusc itself being exceedingly rare. More than once we had the little red animal itself, quite immature, yet possessed of the ten feelers and traces of the incipient coil of the shell within the soft parts, and visible on the ventral side beneath the microscope.

The *Spirula* is the last lingering representative of the fossil Belemnite family of Cephalopods. One or two of the cast-off specimens were infested with colonies of young barnacles in vigorous condition, with the feathery filaments of the limbs in full action. Another trophy proved to be a full-sized specimen of the beautifully ribbed and keeled shell of the paper argonaut, which, abandoned by its inmate, floats lightly on the surface of the sea. It is the external shelter of the female argonaut only, and, unlike other shells, is not necessary to the life of the organism. Sometimes the inmate becomes a free swimmer, in fact, without injury to itself. The male argonaut is violet-hued, considerably smaller in size than the female, and quite uncovered. The eight tentacles are liable to modification in a curious manner. The normal arms have the suckers placed alternately towards the edge of each one. At certain seasons a bud appears to envelop one arm in a kind of sac. This steadily develops into a prolonged tentacle with many suckers; it is finally cast off as the fully-formed organism, to be eventually seized upon by the female argonaut for the purposes of fertilisation, and the male Cephalopod once more regains its normal crown of eight tentacles. A kind of Squid that we took off the port of East

London has eight short tentacles, with two additional long feelers flattened at the extremities for the accommodation of the suckers. The head projects from a sort of tube, and the monstrous eyes are prominent. The internal pen is loosely embedded in the flesh, and can easily be extracted by making the necessary incision. A freshly caught specimen had neutral gray colours; but these change with the usual rapidity into purple, red, or brown hues. From the insides of big fish such as the Bonito, Albacore, or Coryphene we several times rescued strange kinds of Octopi and larger specimens of cuttle-fish. The largest that we captured came from the waters of Table Bay, where, in eight fathoms of tidal water, it attached itself to a deep-sea line. It measured four feet nine inches in length, and fought desperately for life. The colour of this great mollusc was a dull red, shading to a dirty gray. The contents of the ink-bag were of an Indian red hue. All the mid-ocean floating specimens were small in size.

Calm does not always prevail at sea. When the winds arise to lash the waves into a fury, and the huge rollers pass in tumultuous succession, breaking against the ship until she trembles again, we know that storms or cyclones are perilously near at hand. And yet, when the elements strive their hardest, each tiny organism that floats or swims in the ocean survives the gale absolutely uninjured. A shell that is so fragile that it will break almost with a touch survives the fiercest contention of wind and wave. If the broken surface-water is too rough, every organism is so con-

trived that it can sink a few feet until the danger is past. The whole scheme of the pelagic fauna is designed or evolved to this end. Not only do the mollusca feed on animal organisms of inferior degree and minute size, but the fauna ultimately depends upon the microscopic vegetation which abounds in every zone. The late Professor Huxley explained how the multitudes of Radiolarians possessed oil-globules within, which expanded or contracted according as the creatures desired to sink or float; and there are countless millions of minute vegetable bodies—aptly called the grass of the sea—which rise or fall according to the influence of light. It is a matter of common observation that the animals follow the upward or downward migrations of the vegetation. Thus it happens that every creature is specially adapted for sinking or swimming, according as circumstances demand; and the incessant struggle for existence involved in the pursuit of a shifting food-supply likewise tends to preserve the individual from the ravages of storm and tempest.

We have the recollection of a tropical night when the Indian Ocean gleamed with soft white lights from the vicinity of the ship to the surrounding horizon, as if the Milky-way itself had fallen from the heavens to illumine the waters of the deep. Each haul of the net revealed the shells enveloped in liquid fire of phosphorescent light. The molten particles adhered to the sides of the net, the hands, and the very deck of the vessel. It was one of those glorious displays which constitute the fascinations of tropical waters, leaving such an impression on the mind that it can never be effaced.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER IV.



WHILE I was turning over these thoughts the masked figures at the table had laid their heads together and were whispering among themselves. Presently the president stood up, and addressing himself to me in bland tones, said:

'We are awaiting the decision of monsieur.'

'Before I can agree to bind myself by an oath of any kind,' I replied, 'I must make myself fully acquainted with its nature and scope, and satisfy myself that I can take it with a clear conscience.'

'Monsieur has reason on his side,' he answered, with a little bow.

Thereupon he turned and spoke to one of his colleagues, on the table in front of whom was what looked like a small despatch-box. Having unlocked this, the man produced from it a folded sheet of foolscap and handed it to the president, by whom it was passed on to me, with the remark, 'Read this, monsieur, if you please.'

The terms of the document in question were

brief but very much to the point, embodying as they did a solemn pledge never to divulge anything which I might either hear or be a witness of while under that roof. Should the Confraternity have reason to believe that I had broken the terms of my oath (and they boasted that their sources of information were many and peculiar), I should have incurred a penalty of which nothing less than my life itself would be the forfeit.

After reading the document carefully twice over, I said to the president, 'There seems nothing here to which I cannot pledge myself with every confidence.'

I fancied he looked relieved.

'I am glad to find that monsieur has arrived at such a sensible conclusion,' he gravely remarked.

Thereupon he left his chair and came towards me. I rose as he drew near. 'Your right hand, monsieur, if you please,' he said. I held it out, and he took firm hold of it with his own right hand. He had been followed by one of the conspirators, carrying the brace of daggers. These

the latter now held in front of him, crossed one over the other, and our clasped hands were laid upon them. Then the president slowly and solemnly recited the provisions of the oath, his words being repeated aloud by me. By that dim light, with the five masked and robed figures seated at the table—their eyes, as I could feel rather than see, bent upon me as with one accord—and with the sixth holding the crossed daggers, while the president's words dropped one by one from his lips, the scene was a sufficiently weird and impressive one, and one which I was not likely to forget for many a day to come.

When the ceremony had come to an end the man who had held the daggers bowed ceremoniously to me and went back to his seat.

'You have done well, monsieur, and I commend your wisdom,' said the president, with his elusive smile, as he released my hand; 'and so long as you keep your pledge inviolate you will have absolutely nothing to fear. But, in order to prove to you that any infraction of it would involve consequences of the most serious kind, I will ask you to favour me with your company for the space of a couple of minutes.'

Speaking thus and signing to me, he passed out by a door at the farther end of the room. I followed him mechanically—I had gone through so many strange experiences in the course of the last few hours that the faculty of wonder seemed dead within me—and next minute I found myself in a much smaller room than the first one, rather dimly lighted by an oil-lamp on the chimney-piece.

But at once my gaze was drawn as by a sort of horrible fascination to an object which lay stretched out on a couple of boards, supported by tressels, in the middle of the floor. That object was the corpse of a man.

The body was without coat or vest, and the shirt had been torn open at the throat as if in some deadly struggle. The wrists and ankles were bound together by cords. The face was ghastly, with a sort of greenish pallor showing through the skin. A derisive smile seemed to curve the drawn lips, but doubtless that was merely an effect of light and shadow. A thin stream of blood had trickled from a wound in the left temple on to the plank below. One long breathless look was enough. I turned away sick at heart.

'This man was a traitor, and has paid the penalty of his treachery,' remarked my companion in deep, stern tones. 'He wormed himself into our confidence, and then sold his knowledge to our enemies. Such as he deserve no mercy at our hands—and they meet with none!'

'Can such things happen in the heart of London and remain undetected?' I asked myself in a maze of wonder and stupefaction.

My guide had spoken slowly and impressively, and he now paused for half-a-minute, as if to allow time for what I had seen and been told to

let sink into my mind. Then he said, 'And now, monsieur, I will detain you no longer. Follow me, if you please.'

I did as I was told, passing out through a second door, and found myself in utter darkness the moment the door behind me was shut. Then my companion blew a whistle, and presently at the opposite end of the corridor—for such the place proved to be—a man carrying a lighted lamp appeared from somewhere, who, addressing me in French, said, 'Come this way, monsieur, if you please.'

Before complying I looked round, to find myself alone. He of the crimson scarf had vanished.

The man—one I had not seen before—extinguished his lamp as I drew near. Then still another door was opened, and at once the cold night air blew upon me. Three steps farther landed me in the street, but not the same street, I felt nearly sure, as the one in which I had alighted from the cab. That, however, mattered nothing, more especially as there was the same or another cab waiting for me. The man who had shown me out of the house at once opened the cab door, and I stepped inside without a word. Then he mounted to the box beside the driver, and away we rattled through streets unfamiliar to me, till, at the end of ten or twelve minutes, the cab drew up at a corner which abutted on Gray's Inn Road. Here I was requested to alight, and complied with alacrity. Nor was I sorry to see the cab drive off and disappear in the darkness. A hansom quickly took me home.

Years have gone by since that memorable evening, and he of the black charger, who for a little while made such a noise in the world, has gone down to the tomb, a ruined and discredited man.

A few months back, as I was seated on the deck of one of the Calais steamers, a hand was laid on my shoulder, and on turning I beheld a man whom I had no recollection of having seen before. But when he smiled and said, 'Bon jour, Monsieur Simkinson; I hope I have the pleasure of seeing you well,' I at once recognised him, although he was now clean shaven. In point of fact, he was none other than the man of the crimson scarf, he whom I have termed the president of the masked conspirators. Seeing that he was known, he frankly proffered his hand, which I took as frankly. Then he drew up a camp-stool and sat down beside me.

'Yes,' he said presently, with a sigh, in answer to a remark of mine, 'our hero is dead and our Cause is now but a shadow of the past. If he had but lived and had the courage of his convictions! What glittering possibilities seemed at one time within reach of his hand! But he let the golden moment go by, and his star set, never to rise again.'

This was all very well, but I had not forgotten, nor did it seem likely I ever should, that

ghastly object in the second room which he himself had shown me by way of warning.

'You had a rather summary mode of dealing with traitors to your Cause in those days,' I said. 'Let us hope that'— I paused, for a grimly humorous smile had lighted up his dark, resolute face.

'A confession is due to you, monsieur, and I hasten to make it,' he said. 'Our enemies were many and unscrupulous, and it was absolutely essential that we should be able to rely on your secrecy. Had you revealed to those in power certain details connected with our plans which accident had made known to you, the consequences to us might have been disastrous indeed. As the readiest mode of keeping you to your promise, we determined to try the effect of what, I believe, you call in English an object-lesson. The figure seen by you was not that of a dead man, but'—

'That of a living man "made up" for the occasion,' I broke in brusquely.

'Not exactly that, but a waxen effigy, copied from life—or rather, taken after death—by one of Us.'

For a moment or two I stared at him in mute amazement. Then I said, 'You need have been under no apprehension that anything having reference to your secrets would ever be divulged by me. Honour alone would have sufficed to seal my tongue.'

'I believe you with all my heart. But we were not to know that at the time. Everybody does not cherish his honour as you do, monsieur. Further, I may whisper this: only a fortnight before monsieur's visit two traitors—yes, two! but not under that roof—met the fate they so richly merited. They paid for their treachery with their lives.'

THE END.

HUMOURS OF THE IRISH LAW COURTS.

THE Irish law courts supply many humorous illustrations of the life and character of the Irish people, of the quaint manner in which they often express themselves, and of the humour and ingenuity of counsel and judges. A short time since, at the Dublin Assizes, a man was convicted of bigamy. He had married four wives. The judge, in passing sentence, expressed his wonder how the prisoner could be such a hardened villain as to delude so many women. 'Plaze, yer lordship,' said the man, interrupting, 'I was tryin' to get a good wan.' Jeremiah O'Leary was indicted at Cork Assizes for stealing a cow. He was found guilty; and, on being asked by the judge whether he had anything to say before sentence, he exclaimed, 'The divil a word, your honour; and it's my opinion a grate dale too much has been said as it is.' In one of the Dublin police courts a labourer was sentenced to a fine of twenty shillings or seven days' imprisonment for being drunk and disorderly. 'Begorra, your worship, you flatter me intoirely,' he replied. 'Sure, I never knew before my time was worth so much.' The late Mr Isaac Butt, Q.C., M.P., was fond of relating two stories of replies given by children when asked, before being sworn, whether they understood the nature of an oath and the consequences of perjury. In a case in which he was defending a prisoner, an Orangeman, on a charge of being concerned in a party riot, a little boy was called as a witness for the defence. 'If you do not tell the truth,' said the judge, 'where will you go when you die?' 'Where the Papists go, sir,' was the prompt reply. In another case, tried at Limerick, a little girl was asked what would

happen to her if she told a lie in her evidence. 'I suppose, sir,' she replied, 'I wouldn't get my expinses.'

Many good stories are also told in legal circles in Ireland of encounters between lawyers and judges in court. John Philpot Curran, in the early days of his struggle at the Bar, appeared in a case before Mr Justice Robinson, the author of several law-books, and, in combating some opinion of his opponent, said that he had consulted all his law-books, and could not find a single case in which the principle contended for was established. 'I suspect, sir,' said the judge, 'that your law library is rather limited?' 'It is very true, my lord, that owing to my circumstances my library is rather small,' replied Curran. 'But I have prepared myself for this high profession rather by the study of a few good law-books than by the composition of a great many bad ones.' On another occasion, before Lord Chancellor Clare, he laid down some points of law which did not find favour in the mind of the judge. 'If that be law I may as well burn my books,' said Lord Clare. 'Better read them, my lord,' replied Curran.

Some years ago the County Court Judge of Clare was a Mr William Major, who was not liked by a popular Ennis solicitor named Greene. In an action between neighbouring farmers, tried at Quarter-sessions, for damages for the loss of a sheep, which had been killed by a dog, Greene, who appeared for the plaintiff, thus examined his client: 'What sort is defendant's dog that killed your sheep? Is he a bull-dog or a terrier?' 'He is a brown terrier, sir.' 'Is he wicked?' 'Troth, he is, sir—wicked and bad enough.' 'He is a snarling cur, I suppose, and shows his teeth

when he cannot bite?' 'You may say that, sir.' 'Now, tell me, O'Brien, what's the dog's name?' added Greene. Here the witness scratched his head, and hesitated to answer. 'Don't be delaying the court, sir,' cried the judge, 'or, I protest, I'll dismiss your case.' 'Oh, then, your honour, as I must tell it,' replied the witness, 'he's a namesake of your own, for his name is Major.' This palpable hit at the Bench, to which Greene had adroitly led up, convulsed the court with laughter.

A famous barrister named Bushe was addressing the jury on behalf of a prisoner, when the judge shook his head in doubt or denial of one of the advocate's arguments. 'I notice the motion of his lordship's head,' continued Bushe. 'You, gentlemen of the jury, may imagine it implies a difference of opinion with me; but I think you are mistaken; it is merely accidental. Believe me, gentlemen, if you remain here many days you will yourselves perceive that when his lordship shakes his head there is nothing in it.'

But the judge is not always the butt in these caustic encounters between the Bar and the Bench in Ireland. A well-known lawyer, still living, defended a prisoner for horse-stealing before a judge with whom he had had some unpleasant encounters. Seeing no other means of getting his client off, counsel set up a plea of insanity. The judge, in his charge, reminded the jury that there was no dispute as to the facts of the case. 'But,' continued his lordship, 'the plea of insanity has been set up; and I charge you, gentlemen of the jury, that it should receive your very just and serious deliberation; but I must be allowed to say, for myself, that, upon a review of the whole case, I can discover no evidence of insanity on the part of the prisoner, except, perhaps, in the selection of his counsel.'

In Ireland, also, lawyers go to extreme lengths in their efforts to confuse witnesses and discredit their evidence. The great Daniel O'Connell defended two brothers named Hourigan, who were indicted, at the Clare Assizes held in Ennis, with having set fire to the outhouses of a neighbouring farmer with whom they had had a quarrel. The evidence of the Crown was that the buildings had been ignited with pitch, a quantity of which it was known the prisoners had procured some short time before the fire. At the opening of the trial O'Connell had a small pot containing pitch secretly placed on the witness-table, near the chair in which—as is the custom in Ireland—the witnesses sit during examination, and over the pot he placed his large, broad-brimmed hat, so as to effectually conceal it. The principal witness for the prosecution was a police officer, who had arrived on the scene during the fire, and, from the strong smell of pitch which prevailed, he conjectured that it had been used in the destruction of the out-offices. 'You know the smell of pitch, then?' said O'Connell, in cross-

examination. 'I do—well,' replied the witness. 'You seem to be a man able to smell pitch anywhere?' 'Anywhere I find it.' 'Even here, in this court, if it were here?' 'No doubt I would.' 'And do you swear you don't get a smell of pitch here?' cried O'Connell. 'I do,' replied the witness; 'if it were here I'd smell it.' O'Connell, lifting his hat, disclosed the pot of pitch at the witness's feet; and then, indulging in an outburst of characteristic vituperation, cried out to the astonished witness, 'Now you may go down, you perjured rascal.' The jury were so much impressed by the trick that they acquitted the prisoners.

O'Connell saved another prisoner from the gallows by a still more ingenious subterfuge. He defended at the Cork Assizes a man named Hogan, who was charged with murder. A hat, believed to be Hogan's, was found on the scene of the murder, and was a strong point in the case against the prisoner. The witness who discovered the hat, and identified it in court, was a simple-minded but voluble man, who answered questions put to him without much thought. 'You are perfectly sure,' said O'Connell, in cross-examination, 'that this is the hat which you found on the road near the murdered man?' 'Sartin sure,' replied the witness. O'Connell looked into the hat, and after a careful inspection said to the witness, 'Was the prisoner's name, P-A-T H-O-G-A-N' (spelling the words slowly), 'in the hat at the time you found it?' 'Twas, of course.' 'Come, sir, are you sure?' 'Sartin sure, yer honour.' 'You can't be mistaken?' 'No, yer honour.' 'And all you have sworn is as true as that?' 'Yes, yer honour.' 'Then go off the table this minute,' cried O'Connell triumphantly; and, addressing the judge, he said, 'My lord, there can be no conviction here; there is no name in the hat.' The jury found the prisoner 'not guilty.'

In the old days, before railways, a man was tried for highway robbery before Chief Baron O'Grady, on the last day of the Kilkenny Assizes. To the surprise of his lordship, who considered the case clearly proved, the verdict was 'Not guilty.' The judge, turning to the Crown solicitor, inquired, 'Is there any other indictment against this *innocent* man?' 'No, my lord,' was the reply. 'Then tell the jailer,' said the judge, 'not to let him loose till I get half-an-hour's start of him, for I'd rather not meet him on the road.'

Indeed, Irish juries have a 'weakness'—to use a native colloquialism—for the man in the dock. But sometimes a prisoner makes a mistake. At a Quarter-sessions held in Tralee recently, a prisoner, who had no counsel to defend him, was told by the judge that he could 'challenge' or direct to stand aside any juror whom he thought would not do him justice. Presently the prisoner challenged a juror named Michael O'Brien. 'Arrah, Darby,' said the astonished Michael,

addressing his friend in the dock, 'what do yez mane at all? Sure I'm for yez, you *omadawn*.'

Another simple prisoner was Patrick Mac-Namara, recently indicted at the Limerick Assizes for stealing a sheep, the property of his landlord, Sir Garrett FitzMaurice. He pleaded that he found the animal straying on the road, and was simply driving her home. 'Can you read?' asked the judge. 'A little bit, me lord,' was the reply. 'Then you could not be ignorant that the sheep belonged to your landlord, Sir Garrett FitzMaurice, as his brand G.F.M. was on her.' 'True enough, me lord,' said the prisoner; 'but, sure, I thought the letters stood for "Good Fat Mutton."'

The answers given by witnesses to counsel examining or cross-examining them are often very comical. In an assault case the prosecutor deposed that he was suddenly aroused from his slumbers by a blow on the head administered by the prisoner. 'And how did you find yourself then?' asked the counsel. 'Fast asleep, sir,' replied the witness.

An old pedagogue, named O'Doherty, of local celebrity in Donegal, was a witness in a case. During his cross-examination counsel said, 'Where were you, sir, on this night?' 'This night!' exclaimed O'Doherty. 'Oh, but you're

the larned gentleman! *This night* isn't come yet. I suppose you mane that night?' 'Well, I suppose the schoolmaster was abroad that night doing nothing,' continued the counsel. 'What's nothing?' asked the witness. 'What is it, yourself?' said the counsel. 'I'll tell you, thin,' replied O'Doherty. 'It's a footless stocking without a leg.'

In a case tried before the late Baron Dowse a refractory witness refused to answer a question put by counsel, and said, 'If you ax me that question agin I'll give you my shoe on your poll.' 'Does your lordship hear that language?' said the counsel, appealing to the judge. 'The answer to my question is essential to my client's case. What does your lordship advise me to do?' 'If you are resolved to repeat the question,' said Baron Dowse, 'I'd advise you to move a little farther from the witness.'

The politeness of the Irish peasantry is proverbial. There was a ludicrous exemplification of it at the Roscommon Assizes recently at the trial of a man for robbery and assault. An old woman named Mrs Cosgrave was the prosecutrix. On being asked if she saw in court the man who had assaulted and robbed her, she turned round, and pointing to the prisoner in the dock, said, most politely, 'There's the very gentleman, yer honour.'

SCOTCH FISHER LIFE, AS IT WAS AND IS.

Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.



THOSE who have never lived near, or been thrown into contact for a lengthened period with, the fishing population on the east coast of Scotland can have little idea of the great change that has taken place in the social condition of the fishermen within the last forty or fifty years. Among many communities, the villages of Cairnbulg, Inverallochy, and St Combs, grouped together almost on the Buchan portion of the Aberdeenshire coast, may be instanced as an excellent specimen of evolution, in respect of the marvellous improvement upon the fishermen in all matters affecting their home, in the course of the last half-century. Fifty years ago the villages were practically rude clay huts; while the men themselves were ignorant—like the most of their fellows all over the coast—thoughtless of wife and family, and, as a rule, liberal patrons of the public-house. Indeed so keen was their taste for whisky in those days that, in making their engagement for the herring-fishing with the curer, one clause in the agreement was always religiously attended to, and that was to the effect that so many gallons of whisky per week had to

be supplied to each crew, over and above the price for the herrings. The men were very combative, and under the effects of alcohol desperate fights among them were of common occurrence.

In those far-back days the fishermen lived an isolated life, practically partitioned off from the outer world and knowing little of what was going on beyond the confines of their village. Except when they went to Fraserburgh to the summer herring-fishing for a few weeks, the fishermen at the period referred to never left their native village from the time they moved from their mother's knee until they were laid at rest in the quiet churchyard. Literature was an unknown quantity, for the very good reason that only the select few were able to read.

The fishermen's houses, as already indicated, were of a most primitive kind, clay-built and roofed with thatch, with earthen floors, the most of which were as undulating as the surface of the North Sea in a breeze. The houses without exception consisted of a 'but' and a 'ben.' Much controversy has taken place in different parts of the country as to the significance of 'but' and 'ben;' and it therefore may be noted here that the rule among the fisher-people on the Buchan coast is that the 'ben' is the apartment which is in common or everyday use, while the 'but' is a

room of a rather higher status, and used on special occasions only. The furniture was confined to two or three deal chairs, a deal table, and a chest or two, with the absolutely necessary box-bed set against the partition in the house. Doors were seldom, if ever, locked at night. The villagers must not have indulged in much scandal, or been fearful of family secrets or family movements being known, for such a thing as a window-blind was never drawn. Few houses, indeed, were provided with what was considered an unnecessary piece of furnishing. To have seen a blind down would have been considered an extraordinary thing; and, in the opinion of a villager, nothing less than a corpse in the house would justify such a great innovation. The one disagreeable feature about the fishermen's surroundings was the household 'midden' or ashpit, which usually occupied a prominently convenient position at the front and only door. It was an age of utility then, and the housewife thought less of the ornamental than of the saving of trouble.

As for the laws of hygiene, if one couldn't survive the odours arising from the midden during the scorching heat of August he was not fit to buffet the wintry waves that beat mercilessly against their rock-bound shore. So far as concerns light, unfortunately nothing had yet been heard of gas, the electric-light, or paraffin; and even a tallow-candle was a modern luxury in these isolated villages. The lamp used was called an 'Eelie Dolly' by the fisher community. It was a vessel with double shells, and was a thing of most primitive shape and manufacture. A common 'rash' or rush, peeled, served as a wick, while the oil used was of home manufacture, and most commonly extracted from the dog-fish. 'Burning the midnight oil' was a caution in those days, seeing that the lamp always gave a modicum of light but an excess of smell, before which the odours of a herring-offal factory would have been immediately overwhelmed and utterly annihilated. Coals, the use of which is the hall-mark of trade development and advancing civilisation all the world over, had not found their way to the villages. The big magnates of Fraserburgh burned coals judiciously mixed with peat; but the fishermen still used, as their forefathers had ever done, peat and wood for heating and cooking purposes in the house. It was pretty well through the century before coals came into general use among the villagers.

The educational system obtaining among the fisher-folks up to nearly the fifties was simplicity itself. At the age of nine or ten years the children were sent to a dame-school, where two important regulations were laid down. The first was that the children had to wash themselves each evening at the village well before going to bed. Soap and a towel were considered a luxury fit only for the great of the land, and a good douche of cold water, left to natural laws to dry, completed the bairns' toilet for the day. The

other condition was that the children should each bring a peat daily as part-payment of the school fee. With a regular attendance for a week or two, the 'bing' of peats in the corner of the room assumed such dimensions that many times the pupils last to arrive had considerable difficulty in squeezing into the apartment, which was ridiculously small at the best. At the dame-school the children were taught the alphabet and words of three or four letters. After completing their course with Lizzie Davidson, the scholars graduated into an establishment kept by a man named Drysdale, who was half-teacher, half-preacher. The curriculum at what may be called the village 'High School' was not over-ambitious. It consisted of being able to read portions of Scripture and add very short lines of figures together. The teacher himself was not above being troubled with big words; and when he came to any he told the scholars to pass them over as 'foreigners.' At odd times there were numerous foreign words in the lesson.

Fifty years ago herring-nets were hand-made, hemp being the material used, and it was part of the children's education to learn to weave these nets. Thus they early became of considerable assistance to their parents, and were proficient hands at the work by the time they reached manhood. Net-weaving in the old days was one of the most important works in a fisherman's life, and during the winter months this task occupied practically his whole time.

From net-weaving to marriage is a far cry; but as girls were often employed at the work, many a courtship which ended in a wedding had its first start when the lads and lasses were weaving the nets.

It is an interesting fact that fishermen on the northern shores of Scotland have ever married early. The marriage function has changed its character very greatly in recent times. Long ago it was made the occasion of a great feast and a bigger drink. There was hardly any limit to the invitations given, which of course were always by word of mouth; but it was a strict and honourable rule that each guest present should bring with him or her to the marriage feast eatables or drinkables of some kind.

This took the form of tea, sugar, cream, sweet biscuits, bread, jams of all descriptions, oat cakes specially made, &c., with perhaps some liquid that shall not be mentioned. The modern institution of dowering a bride with presents which the guests could not share has never found favour in the fisher-people's eyes. On the marriage morning—and this more particularly illustrates a wedding long ago—the children were treated to milk porridge, which was considered a great delicacy fifty years ago, while the grown-up people were served with an abundant supply of ale brose strongly charged with whisky. The proverbial button was placed in the brose-dish, and the happy finder was, of course, to be first married.

The marriage ceremony generally took place in the afternoon. The wedding procession through the village, with guns firing, accompanied sometimes by fiddle or other kind of music, was an indispensable part of the day's proceedings. At night a fish supper was partaken of, at which all the delicacies already mentioned were done ample justice to. The feast, as it was called, was finished in one day; but drinking went on for a week, and sometimes a fortnight, with the result that fierce quarrels arose among the men; and fighting and bloodshed turned the villages into a regular Donnybrook Fair. There were no policemen in those days to interrupt the sport; and when the carousal was over all was forgotten and forgiven.

As to fishing operations, some curious customs prevailed among these old-fashioned fishermen. For instance, when a crew was 'made up,' each fisherman brought with him his particular portion of the boat's sail, which he claimed and received again when the season's operations were over. Again, at a fishing which was called 'the great line shots,' a term now completely obsolete, each fisherman had his own particular area at sea set apart, wherein he cast his lines, and no fisherman would have thought of intruding upon his neighbour's ground.

These old fishermen were intensely superstitious, as fishermen in past ages were all the world over; and a catalogue of their beliefs in 'the uncanny' in various shapes would fill a volume. They firmly believed in the evils of cock-crowing shortly before midnight, ghosts, sounds before death, and visions of people immediately before death. Two marriage-parties meeting on the road was a certain indication that two or three of the people in the procession, or some of their relatives or friends, would die before a year had elapsed. Ministers of the gospel were held to be most unlucky, and they were most unceremoniously and most unkindly placed on a level with pigs, hares, salmon, &c., any, or any part, of which found in a boat meant some dire calamity at sea to the crew. So strongly did the fishermen feel on this point some fifty years ago that many a time a crew lying in Fraserburgh harbour, on board of whose boat the leg of a hare or a pig had been found, remained ashore for a night, or perhaps two, until the evil spell had lost its power. Many a time limbs of the much-hated animals were surreptitiously placed on board the boats by the 'wags' of Fraserburgh, who, in those sleepy days, were well rewarded by the idle crowd about the shore for raising a storm of excitement among the fishermen and a laugh at their expense.

While the men display eccentric notions of life, the women are not without their peculiarities. One interesting fact is the particular pattern of shawl or plaid worn by the women of the respective villages. The women of Cairnbulg and Inverallochy have always worn a red-and-black-striped shawl, while those belonging to St Combs

display one of blue and black. So strong is the clan feeling that one would not wear the other's colours under any circumstances. Of course, if a St Combs' girl marries a Cairnbulg or Inverallochy fisherman and settles down in either of these villages she has to don the red and black, and *vice versa* on the part of a Cairnbulg or Inverallochy girl.

Funerals among the fishermen at the time referred to had pretty much the arrangements of a marriage, in so far as whisky and tobacco played an important part.

The life of these villagers, though uneventful in one sense, was not without its sad and tragic side at times. Boats, alas! many a time have gone to the fishing from the villages, and, overwhelmed by the sea, have disappeared without leaving a single vestige of them behind. When any unusual calamity of this kind occurred, the excitable and impressionable nature of the people led to displays of grief uncontrollable beyond description.

These villagers have also had troubles which comparatively few towns in Scotland have had to face. During this century the villages have been twice devastated by cholera of a most virulent kind. If they were not the only fishing-villages in the north of Scotland attacked by this terrible disease in 1847, they at least were by a long way the most severely handled. The visitation of '47 was awful, and quite turned the villages into charnel-houses. People went to bed quite well, but were dead before morning. Not a house escaped this terrible messenger of death. The people were perfectly panic-stricken, and as many as were able fled to the country, while others lived among the overturned boats that were hauled up on the beach some distance from the houses. Harrowing tales are still told of how women had, unaided, to coffin their own husbands. Others saw friends drop down and die before their eyes; while some with father, mother, sister, or brother lying dead could not, in the panic, get any one to assist in burying the dead one. In the early stages of the epidemic the victims were mostly the drunken, loose characters of the villages, and the trouble was therefore dubbed 'the godless disease.' When, however, death laid its grasp heavily on the 'unco guid,' that class quickly repented of their want of charity, and could not bear to hear the expression used. The last visitation was in 1866; but, though bad enough, the death-rate on that occasion showed a distinct diminution. Those epidemics were looked upon by many of the simple-minded villagers as a dispensation of Providence; but, though the infection was in 1847 brought to the villages by a mussel-boat, and in 1866 by a seaman, there is no doubt the unsanitary surroundings of the people greatly contributed to the spread of the disease.

After conquering their drinking habits many years ago, the villagers went in for a milder dissipation in the shape of soirees. Of these institutions the fishermen are undoubtedly the warmest

supporters; in fact, the Christmas soiree begins to be looked forward to about the month of August. One of the fishermen generally essays to give an address or 'his experiences' at these gatherings; and at the village soiree proper one invariably occupies the chair. The appearance of the fishermen as platform speakers—although some of them have a remarkable faculty of extempore preaching—is sometimes intensely amusing, not to say ludicrous. At one of these soirees, held in a village near Fraserburgh fully twenty years ago, a fisherman was chairman, and, addressing the meeting, he said, 'Dear brudders, we'll open the proceedings by singing the Hundreth Psalm. We all know it, and I will just repeat the first four lines:

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
In pastures green He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.'

In his excitement the poor chairman plunged, without any feelings of remorse, from the Hundreth into the Twenty-third Psalm; and, fortunately or unfortunately, that he had made a mistake never occurred to him.

All soirees, even at the date mentioned, were not, however, so rich in amusement as the one referred to. How changed are the people now! Education, newspapers, and contact with the outer world have revolutionised the fishermen's life and surroundings. Drink has been practically abjured by every one of them for many years back. A strongly-marked evangelical spirit now animates the people, and an air of comfort, and a contented, happy community, well housed and well cared for, has taken the place of the thoughtless, hard-drinking, and indigent population of the past. Education is far advanced, and scholars of exceptional repute are sent out from the village school, which is excellently equipped, and stands high in the inspector's annual reports.

The revival and temperance waves of thirty or forty years ago took a strong hold upon the villagers, and the effect of these may still be plainly seen. The great bulk of these fishermen are Congregationalists, and their religious feelings are so strongly marked that they ungrudgingly walk to Fraserburgh, a distance of from three to five miles away, each Sunday regularly, so that they may be privileged to worship in the way that seems to them best. This they have done for forty years back. Improvement has gone on at such a rate since the condition of their social life changed that these fishermen are now as fine a seafaring race, physically and intellectually, as can be found on the British coast.

Fifty years ago, with their tiny cockle-shells of boats, they never ventured, when engaged in fishing operations, farther than a mile or two from their own shore. Except on rare occasions, they preferred to wait almost within hail of the beach till the fish came to them. Not only do the

present race of fishermen, with their splendid boats and complete equipment, almost cross the North Sea in search of the spoils of the deep, but they carry on their campaign on almost all parts of the British coast. They are equally at home on the Barra coast, at Stornoway, Orkney, Shetland, the east coast of Scotland, Scarborough, Yarmouth, the English Channel, and even the wild western coast of Ireland. As proof of their qualities, a good many of these villagers have acted as fishery instructors—the chief being an Inverallochy man—on the Irish coast, under the Congested Districts Board of Ireland. Their efforts have met with most gratifying success. The fishing has been developed at a wonderful rate, and its future possibilities, thanks to the skill and teaching of these Buchan fishermen, are of great consequence to the poor Irishmen inhabiting the north and north-west coasts of Ireland.

One of the most important undertakings ever carried out, affecting the interests of the villagers, is on the eve of realisation. A new light railway between Fraserburgh and the villages has been sanctioned, and will be completed within a reasonable time. The long lease of isolation will be at an end, and the resident portion of the people brought into still closer touch with the outside world. The beach between Inverallochy and St Combs, and miles beyond, is beautiful, while a magnificent stretch of links, with turf of remarkably fine quality, second to none in the north for golfing purposes, lies ready to be laid out. With the projected improvements completed, these fishing villagers, with their once primitive ways of life still clinging to the older generation, will enter upon a new and a better era.

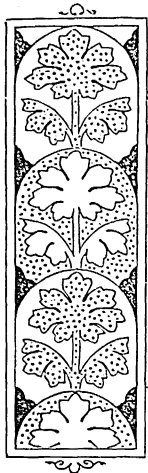
THE COTSWOLD HILLS.

Now the sunset lies a-dying, and the purple fades to gray,
And the arms of night steal softly round the weary,
restless day;
All the rich and mighty city in her fairest robe is drest;
But I would that I were roaming o'er the Uplands of the West!

There's a stretch of barren hillside where the white road
leads along;
Where the larks are quivering downward in a throbbing
joy of song;
Where, below, the far-off valley lies asleep in misty rest,
While the sunset glory lingers on the Uplands of the West;

Where the wolds roll wide and lonely, and the lapwings
call and sweep,
And the dry bents rustle gently to the harebells dropt asleep,
And the silence broods in coolness on the hill's thyme-
fragrant breast,
And the night-breeze wakes and ruffles o'er the Uplands
of the West.

This great world may hold scenes fairer and more dazzling
bright than this,
In far lands of snow-crowned splendour, or in golden isles
of bliss;
All the wide earth laughs in beauty; but my heart loves
still the best
Just the way the dusk flows softly o'er the Uplands of
the West.
EVA D.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

'LLOYD'S' AND OVERDUE SHIPS.

SHE is overdue, and ninety per cent. has been paid on her.' The anxiety and suspense which such an announcement brings to those having friends on board the overdue vessel must be left to the imagination of the reader. It is the financial side only of this subject which the present article deals with.

Not within the present generation have so many vessels been announced as overdue as during the opening months of the present year. Commanders of ocean-going steamers and experienced travellers unite in testifying that the February gales in the Atlantic were something quite unprecedented. Ten or more steamers trading between this country and America have never been heard of since sailing, and are now missing vessels, having in all probability been worsted in an unequal contest with the elements; while others, more fortunate, arrived in a bruised and battered condition just when the last ray of hope was disappearing from the hearts of those interested in them.

The two steamers which perhaps excited the greatest interest were the Cunard steamer *Pavonia* and the Hamburg liner *Bulgaria*. Both are magnificent vessels and regular Atlantic traders, and both were seriously overdue. Indeed, as much as ninety-two pounds per cent. was reported as paid on the Hamburg steamer within an hour of the news reaching Lloyd's that she had arrived at the Azores; but the rate on the Cunarder never exceeded twenty-five guineas. The splendid record which the Cunard Company has for safety no doubt accounts for the reluctance which underwriters on their steamer showed in paying the very high rates usually asked to relieve them of their risks on vessels which are seriously overdue.

Gales in the Atlantic do not, however, exhaust themselves there; they create financial gales at Lloyd's. Not for a long period back has there been such excitement in that venerable institution as was recently seen. There is a room in

Lloyd's known to the initiated as the 'Chamber of Horrors,' in which are posted up from time to time the names of vessels overdue, missing, and wrecked. Of late this list has been terribly heavy. Underwriters eagerly scan the lists as they are posted up, and then as eagerly consult their risk-book to see whether or not they are interested in the casualty announced; and their faces generally tell the tale whether they have been fortunate or the reverse.

Owing to the exceptionally large number of vessels announced as overdue lately, quite an unusual amount of reinsurance has been effected in Lloyd's. The 'Doctors' have been kept very busy. The 'Doctor' is the familiar name given to a broker whose special business it is to insure overdue vessels. When an underwriter who has taken a risk on a vessel in the ordinary course sees her noted as overdue, he has only two courses open to him. He may either stick to his risk and trust to the vessel arriving, or he may get rid of his risk by reinsurance. In the latter case he calls in the 'Doctor' and tells him to reinsure his line at a certain limit—say forty, sixty, eighty, or even ninety per cent., according as the vessel is looked on as only moderately or seriously overdue. Underwriters can usually be found in Lloyd's who will accept any kind of risk, provided they are paid what they consider an adequate premium; and so the 'Doctor' soon comes back to his principal, and tells him he has been able to get the risk transferred to another underwriter. The original underwriter then awaits the issue of events. In due time the vessel reinsured as an 'overdue' either is lost or arrives. In the former case the original underwriter pays the loss to his assured, and then claims the amount from the underwriter with whom he reinsured his risk. Should the vessel arrive, however, he has lost the amount he paid to reinsure, which amount is a clear gain to the underwriter with whom he reinsured.

The arrival of an overdue vessel is notified at Lloyd's by the ringing of the 'Big Bell.' This

bell has a remarkable history. It belonged to H.M.S. *Lutine*, which was wrecked just one hundred years ago (in 1799). She sailed from Yarmouth with a large amount of specie on board, and was wrecked on the very night of her sailing, near the Zuider Zee. The specie was insured at Lloyd's, and the underwriters paid the loss, hoping to recoup themselves to some extent by the recovery of the specie from the wreck. This country was then at war with Holland, and the Dutch Government claimed the whole as a prize. Subsequently, however, the King of the Netherlands agreed to give up to Lloyd's the portion of the salvage claimed by him, which was one-half.

Some fifty years ago specie to the value of fifty thousand pounds was recovered from the *Lutine*, and further amounts at later dates. The ship's bell was part of the salvage, and now occupies a prominent position in the underwriters' room at Lloyd's, and is used, as already stated, to announce the arrival of overdue vessels. The ringing of the

'Big Bell,' as it is called, is a moment of keen excitement in Lloyd's. All ears are open, and all eyes turned to the end of the room, where in a kind of pulpit stands the crier, resplendent in red gown, who, having rung the bell, announces in stentorian tones the arrival of the 'overdue.' Meantime, the underwriters who have stuck to their lines and not reinsured are very happy; others who had given her up for lost and paid perhaps ninety per cent. to reinsure their amounts may be excused if they are not so jubilant. The ringing of the 'Big Bell' has brought home to them the fact that they have paid what is within a few pounds of a *total loss* on a vessel *which has arrived*. In a few moments the arrival of the 'overdue' is flashed all over the country, and it is pleasant to come away from Lloyd's, where, as we have seen, the intelligence produces somewhat mixed feelings, and to picture to ourselves the many homes in which the news will be received as 'tidings of great joy.'

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER V.—A QUESTION OF HONOUR.



HARLES EDWARD, whom we called the Pretender, and quiet-living people the Young Chevalier: there could be no doubt that the man before me was that unfortunate prince.

In truth, I had none. Had confirmation been needed, I had it in the scene in which he had taken part at the Dower-house, and which forbade the idea that I might be misled by a chance resemblance. So great was the shock of recognition, however, that a minute or two had passed before I ventured another look. Now he was talking earnestly to my cousin, who listened with downcast eyes; he was well in my view as he leaned against the rail of the little bridge; and you may believe that I missed no detail of his appearance. But, above all, 'twas his face that held me.

More than once, in London and in Yorkshire, I had sat at the tables of Tory relations who had been 'out' in the '45; and there, when the wine had routed discretion, I had seen the tears welling to the eyes of these hardened old rebels as they described the gallant youth who had led them in fight, and marched joyously at their head through the privations of a winter campaign. And from all I had heard the one testimony: that Charles Edward was the most handsome and gracious prince of his kingly line.

Now I looked upon the same countenance with my own eyes. Yet 'twas not quite the same. The features were there, but the setting was

fuller and less delicate; and misfortune and care—perhaps other causes not so reputable—had left their marks in deeply-drawn lines. Nevertheless, the face had still a certain stamp of nobility—dignity it could never lack—and one could imagine the charm that had once inspired an army with a love and devotion which flouted death itself. I was a Whig, and a servant of King George, and for a minute even I could not behold him unmoved.

But only for a minute. Then, as the significance of his presence on English ground forced itself upon me, my brain became clear. I had suspected a conspiracy: had I stumbled upon the kernel of it?

In any event, my present duty seemed plain. I did not move. Screened by the friendly holly-bush, I could watch the scene without much fear of discovery. I offer no excuse for so doing, and, indeed, I learnt nothing more. The pair conversed together for some ten minutes, the talking, for the most part, being apparently on the side of the Chevalier. And, in the meantime, my ideas were taking shape.

I must mention one fleeting thought (not altogether to my credit, it might be) that had already crossed my mind. Trying to guess a reason for the meeting of the two, I had a suspicion that brought the blood to my face. The Prince's character was a byword; he was, if all accounts were true, a master in the arts of intrigue; and he had an ancestral example how best to relieve the tedium of an enforced concealment. But the suspicion rose merely to be

dismissed. My momentary doubt did not concern Kitty. It concerned Charles alone; and, from my observation, his demeanour was of the most respectful.

The interview, whatever its object, was not prolonged beyond the ten minutes. Charles held my cousin's hand for an instant, bowed deeply, and so turned away; and she, on her part, remained standing on the bridge until he had climbed the opposite bank. At the top he doffed his hat again, and then disappeared among the trees in the direction of the Hall.

Kitty had begun to retrace her steps, and was coming slowly towards me before I was reminded of my own position. Hitherto I had not considered what my course should be. Now, thinking swiftly, I perceived that there was but one. The new situation must be faced sooner or later. Better, then, that it should be faced at once.

Yet 'twas with no light heart that I stepped forth from my hiding-place. She was within a few yards; and I cannot describe—still less can I ever forget—the look that leaped into her eyes as they fell upon me.

'You—*here*?' she cried.

'Yes,' I returned simply. I could say no more; it never struck me to explain or to justify my presence. Somehow it seemed needless.

'Oh!' For a moment she stood silent, and then: 'You have seen—everything?'

And again I assented.

'You recognised the—you recognised *him*?'

The question scarce required an answer, for she must have gathered from my countenance that I had done so—and more. Shuddering a little, as if she were cold, she walked on.

'We cannot talk here,' said she. 'Let us go back to the house.'

Not a word was spoken betwixt us as we crossed the garden; but, stealing a glance, I saw that her brows were drawn in thought, and her little mouth set in a manner that reminded me curiously of Sir Charles. My own brain was not idle. Fate had brought me to the cross-roads, and in the next minute I must choose my path. Perhaps I should not have hesitated. The safety of the State came first; all other considerations must give way to that; and, knowing what I did—who lay hidden at Langbridge Hall, and what that fact meant—I could doubt no longer that a plot more dangerous and matured than I had suspected was in existence. And, knowing that, I still wavered. The struggle was keen—for Kitty was beside me—but it was soon over. Before we reached the house I had made up my mind.

She led me into an empty room opposite to that in which I had left Mrs Herbert, and closed the door. Then she came straight to the point.

'Well, what are you going to do?' she asked quietly.

'There is only one thing,' said I in the same tone. 'I am deeply sorry, cousin, but—I fear I must ask you to direct me to the nearest inn.'

'The nearest inn! But'—

'I must get a horse to carry me to Bath to-night.'

'To Bath?' Her voice grew harder. 'Then you mean to betray the Prince, Mr Holroyd—and us?'

'Not that!' I cried. 'I wasn't even thinking of the Prince—only that some deep scheme is afoot, and I should fail in my duty if I did not give warning. I can never repay my debt to Sir Charles and you all; and you will believe me that nothing'—

But here her enforced calmness broke down. 'Yet you would not scruple to betray us to my Lord Kynaston?' she interrupted me. 'Is this your honour, cousin? Oh! I am not speaking of our claims on your gratitude. But your promises to me—surely they are not so distant that you have forgotten them?'

'Not so, and you may rest content that I will keep them,' I hastened to say, with more eagerness than discretion.

'In the letter—only to break them in the spirit! 'Twill be a notable service!'

'Your father need not appear in this affair at all'—

'And leave his comrades and the Prince to the tender mercies of—my Lord Kynaston? I am afraid he has already settled that question. He might prefer even the worst to the protection of his good cousin—under these circumstances.' Then her tone changed again. 'But must you go?' she asked, pleading with her eyes. 'After all, we have treated you not ill. Think, cousin! It means the undoing of brave men—perhaps their capture and death. Is there no other way?'

'Would to Heaven there were!' I cried, with all my heart; for truly her scorn was easier to bear than this. But I could see no other way for me.

'Then you will go?'

'I am the king's servant; and 'twould be the blackest treason to do otherwise—to hide what I have learnt to-day.'

'So there is no more to be said?' she asked, turning hopelessly away. 'I am only a weak girl, and cannot keep you here against your will. For the rest—well, it may be you are in the right. And you have to remember your own advancement.'

But this was more than I could stand. 'As God is my judge, I have not thought of myself for a moment!' I burst out. 'You may think hardly of me, cousin Kitty—you cannot think that I would betray my friends to benefit myself. It is no question of persons. You would do much for your cause?'

'I would willingly die for it,' said she softly. 'There is no sacrifice you wouldn't make for it,' I continued. 'Well, my cause is not less dear to me, and how can I desert it when a great danger may threaten it—a danger known to me alone? 'Tis bitter hard for both of us—for me, perhaps you cannot understand how hard. But I dare not stand aside. In honour I must go on.'

Kitty's eyes dropped as I proceeded, and I perceived that my appeal was not in vain.

'Forgive me, cousin George,' she said. 'I should not have spoken in that way; but it was all so difficult; and—oh!' she cried, her voice breaking, 'there is nobody to tell me if I am doing right. If only my father were here!'

Frankly, I could not echo the wish; for the meaning of past events was now clearer to me, and I was beginning to suspect that Sir Charles had laid and baited a pretty trap to detain me at the Dower-house as long as it might suit his purposes. And for other reasons, which you may guess, I was not too anxious to meet him just then.

'At the least, will you not await his return?' Kitty went on. 'He cannot be long, and surely an hour or two matters little.'

I shook my head, albeit most reluctantly, and she said no more. The consciousness of her failure showed itself in a pathetic droop of her mouth, and I hastily averted my eyes. Never had I been so hateful to myself, and I felt doubly so when I heard a little sob, and, looking again, saw the tears glistening on her lashes. For a moment, as she strove bravely to control her emotion, her sweet face came betwixt me and my duty, and I had a mad impulse to throw honour aside and choose the easier path. Then I took her hands in mine.

'Kitty, believe that I would give the world to save you this pain!' I cried.

'I am very foolish,' she said, trying to smile. 'But I was thinking of my father—and the others. They have no warning, and what will happen'—

'I was just about to speak of that,' I said; and, indeed, I had not intended to depart until I had made some arrangement to ensure the safety of my friends. 'Whatever befalls, your father must not come to grief through me.'

She withdrew her hands, but the colour stole back to her cheek as I spoke, and there was a new light in her eyes. After a minute she glanced at me shyly.

'I have a plan—if I durst ask the favour.'

'I am trying to find one,' said I.

'I can scarce expect you to grant it,' she continued quickly—'to take a letter to Bath for me, and promise to deliver it before you see Lord Kynaston. More, to say or do nothing in this matter until to-morrow. Is it too much, cousin? I cannot tell what my father will

do; but at the worst 'twill give us time to run away.'

Considering, I convinced myself that the request was not unreasonable—that, at least, not much further mischief could be accomplished in a few hours. By our inclinations agreeing, the result was not long in doubt. So:

'I will do it, Kitty—for your sake,' I promised.

She reddened a little. 'Be sure I can never forget your kindness, cousin,' she replied, and then ran on: 'Now you will want a horse, and if you can wait—I have the call of Mr Kennett's stables, and will send to the Hall for one at once. 'Twill be quicker—the nearest inn is three miles away. Meanwhile, you have your excuses to make to Mrs Herbert.'

Then she went off; and, the die being cast, I crossed the hall and woke Mrs Herbert to hear my news. My pretext was that I felt much better, and so had prevailed upon Miss Kitty to borrow a horse to take me to Bath. The interval was pleasantly spent in combating the good lady's endeavours to change my purpose.

At last, after nearly half-an-hour, the summons came. My cousin had been as good as her word: an excellent animal was waiting outside, under charge of a grinning hostler. At the door she handed me the letter. It had this address: 'To Thomas Kennett, Esquire of Langbridge, at the Pelican Inn, Bath.'

'I cannot be so certain of finding my father,' she explained, as if divining my thoughts.

'You may trust me to see it safe, cousin,' said I.

Then our farewells were spoken. That she did not offer me her cheek as we parted was doubtless due to her father's absence, and I had no fancy to claim it as a cousinly right.

'And the direction?' I asked, having mounted.

'Hold to the left after leaving the avenue, and a quarter of a mile will bring you to the Bath road. Good-bye, cousin! Perhaps we may meet again some time—when the fates are kinder!'

As I rode away I vowed that it should not be my blame if we did not, and at no distant date.

Six o'clock had struck and 'twas long dark when I pulled up in the courtyard of the Pelican Inn at Bath, after an uneventful but most tiring ride. Mr Kennett was not within, but had been there lately; mine host opined that he might be found at the Pump-room. Now my chief desire was to get the disagreeable part of my task over as speedily as might be; and so, having delivered the horse to the landlord's care and attended to my toilet, I betook myself forthwith, under the guidance of a link-boy, to the famous meeting-place of the Bath quality.

There a new difficulty hindered me. The ushers, looking askance at my riding-costume,

were reluctant to admit me; and not until I had exhausted argument, and (as the last resource) mentioned my office, was I permitted to pass those jealously guarded portals. Entering, I was taken in charge by one with the manner of a grand-duke.

'This way, if you please,' said he. 'You would wish my Lord Kynaston to be informed, sir? His lordship has just come, and as you are not in dress, perhaps you would prefer to await him in an anteroom?'

Doubtless he believed that my business concerned the State, and I could do nought but curse him for an officious fool, and follow. But now my good luck was to have a turn; for, crossing the vestibule, the first man on whom I clapped eyes was Kennett himself, walking towards the door with every mark of haste and perturbation in his demeanour. Seeing me, he stopped as if shot.

'You?' he cried.

'I have been looking for you, sir,' said I. 'I am just arrived from Langbridge, and have a message for you.'

'From Langbridge?' he repeated, with a glance that (to my mind) was not free of apprehension. 'I am in some hurry'—

'It need not detain you a minute.'

He turned with me at once, but spoke not another word until the usher had shown us into an empty room and there left us alone. For a moment the only sound was the music of a minuet that came faintly to our ears. Then:

'Well, what the devil is it?' he demanded.

I had cause to resent this tone, but I saw that, for some reason (which I hoped was the miscarriage of his plans), he was in the vilest temper, and so contented myself with pulling out Kitty's letter. He seized upon it without ceremony.

'Ah! poor Kitty Hollingworth,' cried he, tearing it open.

I watched him narrowly as he scanned the contents; and although they seemed to be of the briefest, he must have read them over five or six times. From his face—and be sure I missed not a shade of expression—the news was far from pleasing. At length, with a gesture of anger, he crushed the paper in his palm.

'This too!' he muttered, having apparently

forgotten me. 'Good God! what will Sir Charles say to it? If I can only catch him before that confounded'—

Then he recollected himself, and his hand wandered to his sword-hilt as his eyes caught mine.

'Sir, you have my compliments,' said he. 'A nice bit of work, faith! May I ask what you intend now?'

'Your pardon, but that is my affair,' I returned, bowing.

'And not hard to guess. You will seek out Kynaston—and, Gad! he is to be congratulated on an apt pupil!'

'Oh! you have still a few hours,' said I, nettled by his gibes. 'Mistress Hollingworth has my word that I shall say nothing of your little plan until to-morrow.'

'And then?'

'That you may also guess.'

He took a step towards me, still gripping his hilt. 'So you really expect us to depend upon your word, sir?' he asked.

I bowed again.

'After our former meeting—and your declaration? And now, after all, you have proved yourself the spy and informer! Sir, I will ask to be excused.'

Plainly he was bent on forcing a quarrel, but had overlooked one small circumstance. Otherwise, to be honest, his task would not have been difficult. Even as it was, I could scarce control myself to reply calmly:

'There is but one way to answer a lie such as that, sir. Unluckily, as you are aware, my sword-arm is useless for the moment.'

'I beg you to believe that I had forgotten it,' he said, reddening somewhat. 'Nevertheless, I am ready to repeat the words whenever it may suit your convenience.'

'And I, not less ready to meet them. Meanwhile'—

Here, warned by a noise at the door, I glanced round, to see, standing just within it, the dapper figure of Lord Kynaston! There was a twinkle in his keen eyes as they travelled from one to other of us, and I wondered how much of our conversation he had heard.

(To be continued.)

THE GOLDFIELDS OF SIBERIA.



OLD is found sporadically over the greater part of all Siberia in larger or smaller quantities. East of the Urals gold is worked along the basins of the Obi, the Yenisei, and the Angara Rivers—all west of Lake Baikal. East of that lake the principal gold-workings are at Merchinsk on the Amur

River, or far away to the north along the beds of the streams that water the territory between the Amur and the Lena Rivers.

The whole industry of gold-getting is carefully watched and regulated by the Russian Government, and no gold produced can be legally disposed of but to the Government. According to the present regulations, the gold

recovered is sent to one of the Government proof-offices, where it is assayed and purchased at a fixed rate, a certain percentage being withheld to cover the cost of manipulation. For Eastern Siberia the chief centre is now Irkutsk; but it is intended shortly to establish proof-offices at more convenient centres for the gold brought from the Maritime Province—probably at Blagovestchensk and Khabarovsk, which will save the great cost of carriage to such a distant town as Irkutsk.

The gold found in these districts is all alluvial, and, in spite of the most primitive means of washing, returns a very fair yield. The want of enterprise which the Russian shows in most undertakings is very conspicuous here. Though gold has been worked for years within a couple of days' journey of the port of Nikolaevsk, at the mouth of the Amur River, there are still practically no roads of any kind to the gold-workings; and the cost of supplies of all kinds—for the country is a desert—is, of course, exceedingly high. The want of communications also prevents the importation of the newest machinery, although the Russian Government recently passed a law to allow gold-working machinery to be admitted duty-free into all parts of the empire. This privilege has given a slight impulse already to the workings on the Obi and Yenisei; but in the Far East matters continue the same. In fact, unless gold can be found very near to the banks of a navigable stream, it does not at present pay to work it in the Maritime Province of Siberia. Some idea of the easy-going system of working and the inadequate supervision over the workmen may be formed from the fact that although nuggets of anything up to half a pound troy-weight are by no means infrequent finds, yet they never come into the hands of the owners of the workings unless by the merest chance, and in valuing a mine are left out of account even when known to occur.

The workmen available are all either Buriats, a Mongolian race native to that part of Asia; Koreans, who are found in large numbers all over the Russian Far East; or, best of all, Chinese. These labourers are all very cheap in regard to the question of wages; but, for the reason stated above, their maintenance is a large item in the cost of working. Of genuine Russians there appear to be hardly any employed in the gold-mines of the Far East, chiefly, no doubt, because the only ones available are either time-expired convicts or criminals sent to the far-distant parts of Siberia for residence. The lack of energy of the Russian, and above all his affection for frequent high holidays and the accompanying big drink, which is almost obligatory for all Russians below the level of the educated classes—a very small exception, this—make him a very unprofitable hand, apart from the suspicion of his honesty and the fear lest his antecedents may

not have taught him more than is desirable as to the means of disposing of contraband gold.

In spite of the most stringent laws on the subject, there is an enormous business done all over Siberia in gold, both dust and, especially, nuggets stolen from the workings. It is a criminal offence to be found in possession of gold; but as so large a proportion of the population of Siberia consists of those sent there for punishment, and the only further punishment they have to fear is deportation to some yet more distant region of the same barren and joyless land, the deterrent is by no means so formidable as a mere perusal of the awful menaces of the statutes at first sight seems to convey. Moreover, the successful dealer in stolen gold rarely fails to escape the penalties of his offences, even when caught red-handed. The Russian official even in Russia proper is seldom altogether unreasonable; and in Siberia, where the pregnant saying of the dishonest *chinovnik*, 'It's a long way to Peter'—that is, St Petersburg—is especially significant, the official is 'good-natured' in the extreme; and a substitute can always be bought to accept unpleasant responsibilities. A great part of this gold is conveyed over the Chinese frontier—that is, across the river Amur, which is the sole defence of the frontier against smuggling from both sides—and finds a ready sale at ruinous sacrifices in exchange for a certain fiery Chinese *vodka*. The valuable properties of this spirit, much esteemed by Russian and native alike, are that it gives the consumer the beatitude of intoxication one day, and on the next he can attain the same exalted state by the cheap expedient of drinking water.

The Russian Government has always shown itself very jealous in the matter of admitting the foreigner to undertakings which its own subjects have never proved equal to working as they would be worked by any other people in the world. The laws forbid the foreigner to hold real property in all those parts of Russia where the foreigner alone would be likely to covet such a privilege; and it is only by making exceptions in favour of individuals that such undertakings as the English exploitation of the Baku naphthawells are made possible, and then only with many safeguarding clauses, one of which leaves the Government the right to stop everything at a blow without warning or reason given; the matter of compensation is left to be fought out. In the Far East the same strict rules against the foreigner apply; but some three years ago a special clause was added to the law permitting foreign subjects to petition the Department of Agriculture and State Domains for leave to purchase land and work coal, gold, or other minerals. The explanation given *officially* for this addition to the law is highly instructive; it is that 'Russians have not shown themselves able in the past to work the mineral wealth of this country,

and there is no hope of their doing so in the future.' Permission, therefore, may be obtained by persons not Russian subjects, of whom the Government approves, to own land and work gold, &c. The old law, which even prevented the formation of Russian joint-stock companies in which any foreigner held shares, has thus relaxed much of its stringency; and advantage is already being taken of the opportunities afforded to the non-Russian subject.

In prospecting for gold the regulations ordain that the finder shall at once plant a post on the spot chosen by him, and inform the Government Inspector, who proceeds to the spot and surveys it, marking out the finder's claim to a limited extent on each side of his post. In the case of the banks of a river, both sides may be secured by one finder; but no other claim is allowed to him within so many versts up or down the river on

either side of his first find. The latter difficulty is got over, of course, by entering the second claim in the name of a friend or even a wife; so important to the Russian is the mere letter of the law. In this manner it is possible for one owner to secure actually, though not nominally, any number of miles of gold-bearing stream, his rights extending back for, in the first instance, some half-mile from the banks; the limit of length for each separate claim being five versts, or over three miles. These are liberal figures; and, added to the other considerations mentioned above, sufficiently serve to show in whose hands the gold-workings of Eastern Siberia are. There is no such thing in Russia as the 'gold-diggings fever;' and even on the money market comparatively little is done in gold-mining shares, unless it be in the case of companies which have originated outside Russia.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A SHIP'S RUDDER-RECORDER.



At a time when collisions and other accidents to ships are far more numerous than they should be, the invention by Mr J. E. Liardet of a helm-recorder—which, actuated by the rudder, gives a history of the course steered, and the various deviations from that course—will meet with the attention which it deserves. The record is made by a pencil on a paper band which moves on a drum actuated by clockwork, and it will not only be useful in clearing up disputed points in case of collision, but it will also afford evidence of the competency of the man at the wheel. Some steersmen will keep to a straight course far better than others, and this means a saving of time and—in the case of a steamship—of fuel. The new apparatus will enable a captain to pick out the best men for work at the wheel.

AN INTERESTING CENTENARY.

The Royal Institution of Great Britain has been celebrating its centenary by a banquet and by commemoration lectures. This noble institution was founded by Benjamin Thompson, afterwards Count Rumford, its scheme being much after the pattern of that pursued by the present Society of Arts—that is, an endeavour to bring science and art into closer contact. With the advent of Davy as manager in 1802 the original programme was dropped, and the Institution became what it is now, a place where lectures are delivered, and where experimental researches in pure science are conducted. It was in the theatre here that Davy first showed the electric light between points of carbon. It was here, in 1812, that Faraday, a young bookseller's apprentice, attended some of

Davy's lectures and afterwards ventured to send his notes of them to the great man. Davy took a fancy to the lad, and offered him the post of assistant in the laboratory. What great things Faraday did for science most people know. It was here that he discovered that close connection between a magnet and an electric current which was the germ which finally gave us the modern dynamo and all its wonders. Tyndall, who followed Davy, kept up the reputation of the Institution by his lectures and scientific researches; and he has been worthily followed by Lord Rayleigh, Professor Dewar, Professor Ray Lankester, and others who are now at the helm of this wonderful ship of science in Albemarle Street, London.

BALLOONS IN WARFARE.

Experiments recently conducted by the Balloon Department at Aldershot point to the possibility of a new horror being added to modern warfare. The idea is to drop from balloons heavy charges of high explosives into fortified works beneath them, so as to annihilate the garrison and dislodge the guns at one fearful operation. The suggestion does not seem to be altogether new, for it has been foreshadowed in some of those lurid novels now so much in vogue, in which scientific marvels of the future are dealt with as if they were realities of the present. The accounts of the experiments in question are somewhat vague—perhaps they are purposely so; but what we gather from them is that it is found possible to send up small balloons carrying explosive charges, and that these charges can be released from a distant point by a modified application of Marconi's wireless telegraphy apparatus. It is stated that the explosives can be so dropped with

wonderful precision, into a space of little over an acre in area, from great distances. We are glad to note that at the Hague conference this method of warfare has been forbidden, at least, for five years.

A NEW PRINTING METHOD.

Although the new process to be described has been called 'an improvement in lithography,' we hesitate to adopt such a title, because it does not employ a stone, but a zinc plate. But the method is lithographic in its nature, seeing that the parts of the metal upon which the ink is not required to act are rendered antagonistic by a chemical application just in the same way that water is made to resist the action of the greasy ink in the usual lithographic process. The nature of the chemical used is at present a secret; but it was discovered by one of those fortunate accidents which have so often come to the aid of observant men. The invention is that of Mr G. R. Hildyard; it can be carried out on an ordinary fast-running letterpress machine; and, as colour-work can be effectively dealt with by the new method, it promises to be of great value. Such a process, in which neither water, gum, nor acid is employed, to say nothing of the saving of labour involved in preparing the stones for the press, appears to offer many advantages.

A NEW CAB-FARE METER.

A fare-meter that claims to possess several improvements upon the taximeter, which has already been noticed in our columns, has been recently introduced. The apparatus has two dials which are inside the vehicle, one of which shows the distance run in miles and yards, and the other the time which has elapsed since the hiring of the cab, both starting from zero when the hirer enters the vehicle. In addition, there are secret registers by which the proprietor can tell the exact distance run by the cab during the day, so as to check the driver's accounts. The connection between the wheel and the mechanism is by a steel wire which receives a 'to-and-fro' motion from a cam on the hub, and works a ratchet-wheel in the fare-meter.

AIR LIQUEFACTION.

We have recently had an opportunity of seeing at the works of Brin's Oxygen Company, Westminster, the apparatus invented by Dr Hampson for the production of liquid air. The small bulk of the apparatus at once excites surprise, for it occupies only two square feet of floor room, so compact is it in its arrangements. Its principal part is a coiled mass of thin copper tubing, through which the air to be liquefied, after being robbed of its moisture and carbonic acid, circulates under pressure from an attached pump; or the air may be driven direct through the apparatus after having been compressed in a portable cylinder. At the lower end of the magazine of

coiled tubing the air is allowed to escape through a valve, and thereupon it immediately expands with the development of great cold; and this cooled air is directed upwards over the tubing, so that the oncoming air is rendered colder and colder until a point is reached when it can no longer retain the aeriform condition, and it accumulates in a vacuum jacketed glass receiver below in the form of a pale-blue liquid. Under the most favourable conditions the air is seen to commence liquefaction five minutes after the compressing pump is put into action. Dr Hampson was, we believe, the first to apply this self-intensive principle—without any aid from other methods of refrigeration—to the liquefaction of gases; and it is due to this principle that the reduction of hydrogen to the liquid state became possible.

PRINTING WITHOUT INK.

The march of improvement has long made it possible to make bricks without straw; but to carry on the work of the printing-press without the employment of printing-ink would seem to be a far more difficult thing to achieve. This apparently impossible task has been conquered by the Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate of Brixton, London, at whose premises we recently saw the new system in operation. It is, however, not new in principle, for so long ago as 1845 Bain, in his electro-chemical telegraph, adopted the same means for recording his message upon paper. The paper is prepared with a chemical solution, such as nitrate of manganese; and when this, in a damp condition, is run between two metallic surfaces, and a current of electricity is passed from one to the other, the chemical is decomposed and the paper is stained. In the new method of printing, paper is used which has been chemically treated during its manufacture, which can be done without additional cost to the material; and this paper, supported on a metallic surface, receives pressure from the type, while at the same time a current of electricity takes the place of ink. Any existing printing-machine, by the removal of its inking arrangements, and connection with a source of electricity, can be readily converted to the new system, while its output is increased and all cost of ink and rollers saved. The invention appears to have a wide future before it, although it is not likely to prove a rival to high-class printing.

SUBTERRANEAN TRAMWAYS.

A proposal is before the London County Council to relieve the enormous street traffic in the Metropolis by constructing electric tramways just below the surface of the pavements, ready access to which could be obtained at nearly every street corner, in which respect the scheme would differ altogether from the deep-laid electric railways already in use. The trams would run on a double

line of rails, and would occupy subways beneath the chief thoroughfares, such as are now actually provided in the newer streets of London. One great advantage of the system would be that such subways would, besides furnishing a passage for the electric cars, afford accommodation for telephone and telegraph wires, besides gas and water pipes, thus avoiding the constant upturning of the thoroughfares which at present is such a standing disgrace to our municipal arrangements. It is said that such light underground tramways already exist abroad, notably at Boston and at Budapest, and that they are paying concerns. The scheme for London comprises in the first case a line from Westminster to the Bank, a route which at present cannot be traversed above ground without constant vexatious stoppages owing to the congested traffic of the thoroughfares.

ALUMINIUM.

The beautiful white metal aluminium, which, on account of its extreme lightness and cheapness, has within recent years come into such common use, is vulgarly supposed to be free from that tendency to be acted upon by acids which is common to most other metals. Referring to this popular belief, Mr A. Witte, in a recent communication to the Paris Academy of Sciences, has pointed out that the resistance of aluminium to acid influences is due to the presence on its surface of an impervious layer of alumina. When this is removed, as it can be by a solution of common salt and acetic acid, the metal is acted upon very rapidly. A solution of sea-salt will act upon the metal if oxygen and carbonic acid are present at the same time; thus a plate of aluminium, after immersion in sea-water, will be corroded if it is exposed to the air without being cleaned, and the corrosion will become worse and worse. Those in possession of articles made of aluminium, such as field-glasses and the like, should take warning from these facts.

A GLORIFICATION OF THE VINE.

Among the many other extraordinary sights that are in store for visitors to the famous French Exhibition next year, one of the most remarkable will be a panorama relating the history of the vine from the earliest biblical days down to the present time. This panorama, which will be 4000 feet long, will form a background to a number of constructions of different historical periods, arranged into streets, according to the epoch they represent. These buildings will be, in reality, restaurants, cafés, and wine-bars, where the different wines from all the countries will be sold by pretty girls in the different costumes of their respective nations. The streets will be bordered with growing vines, and will be lighted by electric lights, arranged inside bunches of grapes. There are to be concerts organised, in

which the songs are all to be in honour of the vine, and representations of vintage scenes; both ancient and modern, will be constantly given—in short, this particular branch of the Exhibition will undoubtedly be a glorification of the vine in all places and all countries. It will occupy 40,000 feet of ground, and will certainly have the merit of novelty.

PILE-DRIVING.

The power of water under pressure has often been applied to pile-driving; but a simple application of the principle as described in the instructions to technical works for the Russian Engineer Corps is of interest. The pile to be driven is furnished on two opposite sides with longitudinal grooves, of sufficient capacity to receive iron gas-pipes, which may be of one and a half inch diameter, but contracted at the lower end like a hose-pipe, and turned towards the iron-shod point of the pile. The upper ends of these pipes are connected by rubber tubing with a force-pump, so that water under pressure, about seventy pounds to the square inch, can be projected into the soil at the base of the pile. It is said that under this treatment a pile will sink into the earth far more quickly than if driven in by the ordinary method. The pipes can be removed so as to do duty again and again as soon as the pile has sunk to the required depth.

BIRDS' NESTS.

In China they make soup of birds' nests, and the 'edible' nest is quite a feature of mandarin cookery. These nests must be very different from some which were exhibited at a recent meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, where a heron's nest was shown built almost entirely of wire such as is used in reaping-machines to bind the sheaves. A member is in possession of a turtle-dove's nest made entirely of wire, and some Indian crows have discovered that the wire from soda-water bottles makes excellent nesting material. The nest of a spotted fly-catcher was shown, built to a great extent of wax vestas and with the paper of cigarette-ends embedded in the sides; while the wrappings of champagne bottles, evidently left by a picnic party, were found in a moorhen's nest. To illustrate the not very common practice of birds building inside the nests of other birds, the nest of a wagtail built inside the old nest of a blackbird was exhibited, as well as a robin's nest built inside the old nest of a thrush. In this last case there was a cuckoo's egg inside the robin's nest, so that the original structure had served three different species. A woodchat's nest built entirely of flowers lent a pleasing variety to the show; while another covered with confetti showed that the builder must have been a participant in some gay and festive occasion or other. Not only in selecting materials for their nests, but in choosing sites for them, birds would

appear to have strange fancies. They are proverbially fond of churches; and recently a pair of robins have ensconced themselves in the organ-pipes of a church at Bournemouth, while another pair have nested, laid, and hatched on a book-ledge in another country church. Even scare-crows have not deterred them, and the cannon's mouth has lent a ready entrance to 'Miss Wren,' whose nest was found at the farther end of a disused gun, at the bottom of the touch-hole. Railway carriages and signal-posts have equally attracted them; and nests have even been found in the hollows underneath the rails, all the operations of maternity being carried on while the trains thundered above. Wayside letter-boxes have frequently afforded shelter to the hard-pressed but confiding tits, who have found little difficulty in squeezing themselves through the aperture intended to exclude the predatory hand of the tramp. Even the more prosaic sites chosen by some birds for their nests show a curious disregard of the fitness of things, and a contempt of danger which often leads to disastrous consequences. But they are soon consoled for the loss of their homes, and bird families are no sooner broken up than they are constituted again. On the other hand, some birds will return to the same nest year after year.

A ROLLER AND MOWER COMBINED.

What seems to be a very useful application of the horseless vehicle or 'auto-mobile' is the combination of a garden-roller and lawn-mower which has been introduced by Messrs Grimsley & Son of Leicester. The machine is driven by a two-cylinder petroleum engine, and works up to six horse-power. It is well adapted for large areas, such as parks, cricket-grounds, and the like, where the turf must be kept like velvet, and where the tread of an animal's hoofs—the drawback of the ordinary mowing-machine or roller—is objectionable.

HISTORY IN POTTERY.

An exhibition of a quaintly humorous as well as most interesting kind has recently been opened at the Bethnal Green Branch of the South Kensington Museum. This is a collection of pottery and porcelain illustrating popular British history, and is lent by Mr Henry Willett of Brighton. Mr Willett points out in the excellent catalogue which has been published that the history of a country may to a large extent be traced on its homely pottery, and that these articles—plates, mugs, vases, jugs, statuettes, tiles, models, plaques, &c., which may still be found on the mantelpieces of many cottage houses—are the records of popular events. The exhibition has no pretence to excellences of ceramic art, but has been made up of the homely articles referred to; and the classification is not of the usual chronological kind, but deals with the greater human interest which the

various objects present. Thus we find on the cases such titles as Military Heroes, Naval Heroes, Royalty and Loyalty, Noted Men, Costumes and Characters, Religion, Sporting, Conviviality, Crime, and Domestic Incidents. The collection is probably unique, and is extremely interesting to those who care to trace back some of the waves of popular feeling which have swept over the country during the two past centuries.

COMBATING DISEASE.

The Liverpool School of Tropical Disease, which was opened by Lord Lister only a few months ago, is doing good work. A special ward at the Southern Hospital has been set apart for the clinical instruction of the students; and the committee have definitely decided to send a commission to the West Coast of Africa to investigate the causes of malaria and other diseases common to that unhealthy seaboard. Special attention will be paid to the investigation of the theory that malaria is spread by the bite of the mosquito. Major Ross, who has had much experience in the investigation of disease in India, will be in command of the West African expedition, the results accruing from which may be of the most valuable kind.

EXPERIMENTS ON THE FERTILISATION OF PLANTS BY INSECTS.

Professor Plateau, of the University of Ghent, has, after considerable study, been making an exhaustive series of experiments with regard to the fertilisation of plants by means of insects visiting them. Until now it has always been supposed that the blossoms, anxious to attract the little visitors so necessary for their reproductiveness, not only gave forth their sweetest perfume, but also attired themselves in their gayest and most alluring garb for the same purpose. But Professor Plateau has come to the conclusion that sight plays a comparatively small part in directing the insects' choice of flowers in comparison with scent. His experiments go to prove that they are quite indifferent to the colours of flowers they visit in search of honey, for he has covered over with bits of green leaves the gay petals of such brilliantly-hued flowers as the dahlia, but the insects still continued their visits. Nor were they influenced by the absence of colour caused by removing the corollæ of the bright lobelia, foxglove, or evening primrose. The professor also tried the experiment of artificially providing with honey certain vivid flowers, such as the geranium, which seldom or never attracts the bees, with the result that they were at once allured, passing over similar flowers not thus treated. He then tried the experiment of removing the honey-bearing parts of the flowers, leaving only the showy outer petals. The single dahlia was used as an example, but the flower was neglected until a single drop of honey was inserted, when they came as before.

Oddly enough, even flowers formed of green leaves, when honeyed, were rifled of their sweets, but the bees and other insects were too clever to be tempted by artificial flowers even when provided liberally with honey.

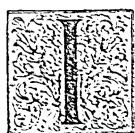
GERMAN EXPLORATION OF BABYLON.

The Sultan of Turkey has just given permission to a German expedition to explore the ruins of Babylon. This exploring party sent out by the Government of Berlin will be directed by Dr Robert Koldewey. The examination of the ruins will last five years, and will doubtless be of immense value historically. The position of the ruins of Babylon was determined for the first time by Mr Layard, who was later the English ambassador to Constantinople. It will be remembered that it was he who discovered the ruins of

Nineveh, which were afterwards explored by French savants (1815-1854). Some years later Sir Henry Rawlinson went over the same ground. The last explorer was Rassam, a friend of Mr Layard. But all these researches were only partial, whereas the Germans, with their usual plodding thoroughness, intend to pursue their examination in a methodical and complete manner. Great sand-heaps along the banks of the Euphrates, where Babylon once stood, two days' march from Bagdad, show where the most important monuments lie. The greatest of these is called El Kass'r. It is said to cover the ruins of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, where he spent the greatest part of his reign, and where Alexander the Great died. The Germans intend to begin their explorations by opening this sand-hill, and so settling the question.

THE VELVET MOUNTAIN.

AN ADVENTURE IN KAMCHATKA.



HOPE Porouguine will not see this; if he should I beg to apologise. But there is not much periodical literature at the hot springs of Tareinski, in Kamchatka; and, on the whole, I am inclined to take the risk. Porouguine is not one of your very large Russians—on the contrary, he is rather below the average height; but if you borrow his warm leathern coat—as I did—you will most likely have no difficulty in buttoning it over your chest, and will probably find the ends of the sleeves coming well over the knuckles. Muscles hardened by exercise and exposure to the consistency of triple brass, a constitution as sound as a bell, and a keen diamond-blue eye, set far back in an intent, weather-beaten face, indicate what he is—namely, a mighty hunter; for Porouguine has shot three hundred bears in his time, and kills and cures thousands of salmon yearly with his own hands. He also keeps a log shanty, called, I am led to understand, a 'hotel,' and probably the only one in the vast, silent peninsula of Kamchatka. Porouguine's Hotel has but poor accommodation. Be that, however, as it may, the red glow from its windows, accompanied by the howling of the sledge-dogs tethered in the yard, coming suddenly out of the darkness after a piercingly cold ride through the swampy forest at the head of the East Lake, was the most welcome thing we had come across for a long time.

I was travelling with my friend Zaporoff, a wealthy young Russian, who had served his year in the horse artillery as a gunner in the St Petersburg Military District, and was now going round the world in order to complete the education commenced in a university of European

Russia. In a very short time after our arrival we were both descending by a ladder through the floor of the bathing-house, built on piles at the edge of the largest hot spring, which formed a pool about the size of the ordinary horse-pond usually to be found in the village greens of far-away England.

Fate, and the orders of the Commander-in-chief on the China station, had brought me to this out-of-the-way, but extremely interesting, spot; for I was attached to one of Her Majesty's cruisers, which had parted company from the cruising squadron assembled at Hakodadi in the Northern Island of Japan, in order to patrol round the seal-rookeries of the Commander Islands, situated some three hundred miles east of the Kamchatka coast. Here international diplomacy has laid down the law that none going down to the sea in schooners or other craft shall do any seal-fishing within a belt of thirty marine miles from the coast, under peril of magazine-fire from the rifles of the Aleut guard ashore, or summary arrest by the British or Russian man-of-war cruising in the sacred zone of salt water, followed by an enforced appearance before the Consular Court at Yokohama or the judicial authorities at Vladivostok, as the case might be. Just at present it was the turn of the Russian man-of-war *Manreatz* to do the monotonous cruising round the islands, while we of H.M.S. *Desirée* were recruiting in the sunny harbour of Tareinski. As the ship had been in commission some time, and was in very fine order, my duties were not particularly onerous in harbour, and I had brought Zaporoff over as my guest from Petropaulski—which was about a dozen miles off across the bay—with the object of getting some bear-shooting; and it was in this way that we found ourselves sitting up to our

chins in the warm sulphurous waters of the hot springs, getting the cold out of our bones after fifteen hours of sailing, duck-shooting, wading, riding, and walking. The day had begun finely and well; but as twilight deepened the biting wind had piled up the scurrying clouds, and a searching drizzle, which froze as it fell, had warned us that if we wished to last through the night we must get under cover somewhere; and—delightful feeling!—here we were with Porougine's hospitable shelter under our lee, with the prospect of a good supper, and appetites which the keen air and hours of fasting exercise had sharpened to that point when the sensation of hunger merges into that of voracity.

Porougine has had three wives, the last of whom—a buxom, rosy, jolly, peach-skinned young woman—sits at the head of the table. Sixteen children have the quartette given to Holy Russia, varying from the dark-skinned, sallow, rather silent eldest son, who lives with his father and thinks of nothing but his rifle and pretty, newly-married wife, to the last-arrived pink baby, generally ensconced in her mother's comfortable arms, but now fast asleep, breathing softly, in its parents' bed, occasionally twitching its chubby little fists, and warmly wrapped with the skins of reindeer, bear, wolf, and big-horn sheep. The room seemed hot and stuffy after the open air, but that made little difference to the not very fastidious party gathering round the hunter's homely but hospitable table; and we were about to sit down to a smoking dish of reindeers' tongues, when an inner door opened, and we were joined by another couple, of whose presence, in the only private room of the house, we had not previously been aware.

The new-comers proved to be the very learned—and muscular—Doctor Koltzoff, of Moscow, who, with Madame Koltzoff—tall, elegant, handsome, and accomplished—was staying at the hot springs, resting after a scientific and exploring expedition in the central wilds of Kamchatka. The Doctor is a large-boned, bearded philosopher, with a benign face and a frame as stiff as oaken timber; his modest and sympathetic manner concealed—what I afterwards found out—the fact that he was probably the greatest living authority on the ethnology, geology, zoology, and botany of that part of Asia extending from Behring Strait to the Great Wall of China. A splendid white hound lumbered in after them, and, dropping with a thud on the floor behind their chairs, gave two or three noisy thumps with his tail, to wish us all greeting as friends of his master, like a canine gentleman as he was; then remained perfectly still, his head on his paws, except when he gave an occasional look up at the Doctor or madame, or when a more than usually savoury whiff from the table forced an oblique glance from his liquid eye.

We none of us spoke much at first, and it was

not until the reindeers' tongues had been disposed of and the next dish, consisting of stewed salmon's heads, was well on its way after the first—washed down by *kirin* beer from Japan, reindeer's milk, whisky, or *vodka*, as our various tastes suggested—that we commenced talking by asking the Doctor where he had picked up his magnificent hound. It appeared he belonged to a very rare breed employed by the Tchuktchis—an Eskimo tribe inhabiting the country situated between the north of Kamchatka and the west coast of Behring Strait—for hunting wolves in the bleak and inhospitable regions which extend from thence far inside the Arctic circle. The chief of the tribe, having been operated upon by the Doctor for carbuncle, had in return presented him with a pup of this valuable breed, which are very celebrated for their acuteness of scent; and the dog and his master had since been inseparable. A pasty of boiled salmon, with rice and cabbage, was succeeded by dishes of salmon roe, fishes' hearts, and reindeer-foot jelly; and, when we had finished the repast with a hot glass of tea in which floated slices of lemon, the Doctor gave us quantities of information about all parts of north-east Asia, but more particularly Kamchatka, with its virgin forests, volcanic ranges, and unfamiliar animals.

It appeared that the Doctor, on returning from his scientific mission, whilst passing through the Velvet Mountain district, a few hours' ride from the springs, had come upon a couple of Aleut hunters, one of whom was mortally wounded, as it proved, when returning from a bear-hunt. The injured man had been badly mauled about the face and head, besides having a broken wrist and a terrible compound fracture of the middle third of the thigh-bone, and was evidently dying. However, the Doctor gave the poor fellow a restorative, and did what he could to ease his agony; and directing the unhurt man to get some wood for a fire, while the remainder of his own expedition, whom he had outstripped, were still struggling through the brushwood, the Doctor sat down by his patient to watch the effect of the medicine. After a few laboured groans the unfortunate Aleut's eyes partly opened, and, though glazing fast, cleared again a little as the cordial began to take effect. He then muttered in his own language—with which Dr Koltzoff had become familiar in his prolonged researches—how, after a very successful shoot, he was coming down from the high mountainous regions to which the bears resort in summer, by a pass which he had not used before, near the Velvet Mountain (so called from its peculiarly black and glossy sheen when seen in certain lights), when, as he was walking down a steep path running along the face of a bold cliff and was nearing an angle, a huge beast, whitish and shaggy, had sprung out on him, hurled the pony he was leading into the depths below, and, as he

expressed it, 'began throwing him about until all his bones were broken.' Doctor Koltzoff, much interested, tried to get more details; but poor Ivan's strength was nearly gone, and, gasping out some words again, emphasising the size of the beast's claws, and especially his fangs, gave a shivering gasp, and, as the Doctor put it, a fatal termination soon supervened. In that province of the Russian Empire little is thought of an Aleut hunter more or less, and a shallow trench with some heavy fragments of granite were soon all that concealed the body of poor Ivan.

The conversation, which had been hitherto chiefly monopolised by the Doctor, now took a more general turn, and I told him I had met one of his *confrères* in our navy, who had served in a ship that had taken part in the disastrous attack of the Anglo-French squadron on Petropaulski in 1854, and had made a search in this very locality for fossils, being an enthusiastic geologist. He had been much struck by the quantities he had come across in certain parts, particularly in a pass near a conical black mountain, of which he did not know the name, nor is it known as the Velvet Mountain on the Admiralty charts, the name being purely local.

Young Zaporoff was, I saw, now fast asleep, leaning against the logs forming the wall of the house, his pipe—which seemed to have been out a long time, for it felt quite cold when I took it from between his lips—still set in his clenched teeth; the ladies had gone, and old Porougine had got away promptly as soon as the conversation began to sound scientific, preceded by his son, who had turned in unhesitatingly directly after supper. Mrs Porougine had made up the fire in the Russian stove for the night, and by these portents the Doctor and I divined that it was time for us to go also; so, knocking out the ashes of our pipes, we woke Zaporoff up, and, with high hopes for the next day's shooting, we bade each other good-night, and were soon under the heap of soft skins covering our beds.

Beds in Kamchatka are not always as comfortable as they might be; and, either for that or some other reason, my sleep was fitful and disturbed. The scenes of the preceding day kept recurring more or less vividly to my imagination, and then fading away into snatches of oblivion, alternating with periods of intense wakefulness, in which the time seemed never-ending; the snoring in different keys that penetrated the thin partitions—for the hotel was practically one big room divided up by wooden screens—sounded more than usually aggressive; the air was smoky and flavoured with the aroma of cured salmon; and the watch under my pillow seemed to tick with a metallic ring. After some hours of this I could endure it no longer; and just as the day was breaking such a longing for fresh air came over me that I decided to turn out, and, finding the younger Porougine—who, I knew, had intended to

start before us—go on for our camping ground among the hills, leaving a message to tell old Porougine and Zaporoff what we had done. Putting our exceedingly small impedimenta in front of him, the young man and I started on our journey in the gray dawn, and, striking in a direction about a quarter of a circle away from our destination, the Velvet Mountain, went on at a steady jog-trot, bestriding the short-legged country ponies, with heads like hippopotami, legs short and columnar, and the climbing capacity of a squirrel. My guide was armed with a repeating .500 Winchester rifle, while I took a long .303 Lee-Netford, as I wanted to try the effect of small-bore, high-velocity bullets on big game. In order to make the bullets expand on striking, a cross had been cut on the nose with a very fine saw, and into the small slits thus made tallow had been poured, and with them I felt perfectly confident of stopping anything I was likely to meet.

We got along slowly, making our way through forests of fir and ash. Occasionally we would come across the track of an immense bear, with its deep claw-marks and shape of a clumsy and very broad human foot-sole; and again we would pass a river running black and smooth and cold, the banks sometimes slushy and sometimes gravelly, but always alive with salmon. Even the little rivulets, shallower than a salmon's draught of water, were swarming with fish, half-swimming, half-wriggling over the stones, and looking like streaks of burnished silver in the dim darkness of the gloomy morning. Now we began to bear away to our right, crossing the brawling brooks, which had little hollows of spongy ice adhering to the roots of the rusty-looking tufts of grass growing on their banks.

Working still more to our right, the scenery became rapidly wilder as we rode along, the ascent steeper, and the appearance of the craggy mountains to which we were drawing near more fantastic and grandiose.

Before leaving the last rivulet we had shot a couple of salmon in the shallow water, and after gutting them we had slung them, for future use, to the saddle of my 'universal provider.' On resuming our ascent the way became extraordinary and most wild in appearance; and yet, unaccountably, I seemed to have been over it before, which puzzled me, as in my present state of existence, at any rate, this was impossible. The general appearance of the rocky glen was now becoming sinister and awful. The sky gave signs of an approaching storm, and the animals and birds seemed to have disappeared. The path, which had been running between two high, steep hills covered with burnt-looking boulders, gradually clung more and more to the left-hand mountain, which slowly assumed a steeper slope, until, dwindling down to a ledge some four feet broad, it ran along the front of a cliff, and, rising

rapidly higher and higher, owing to its steep gradient, at length had an immense perpendicular descent to the right, while the cliff on the left towered up far away until its summit seemed lost among the dense clouds which were fast gathering and scudding before the wind, bringing down long straight lines of snow.

So threatening was the appearance of the weather that I more than once wished myself clear of the pass, and wondered if we should ever get out of it, as we were only in the forerunner of the storm; though even now the horses—strong, good, and patient little beasts that they were—seemed to have as much as they could do to face the squalls. It had never been very light; but, as the storm hung low and increased in might, the clouds began to change their tints from a dull purple-violet to a sombre black. The little light there was began to fade fast, and the distant ominous reverberations of thunder were tossed about in echoes from the massive sides of the mountains; while the flickering lightning, which had at first only appeared as a transparent, incandescent glare, illuminating the surfaces of the clouds from within, now tore in quick crooked ribbons between the clouds, as well as from them, to the earth, and the falling snow changed suddenly into sharp showers of hail.

The wind, which had decreased a little, now shifted more to our right front, or towards the cliff over our heads, which was a decided relief, as our horses had almost come to a standstill, and our bodies in front were covered with frozen snow, our beards were frozen, and I am convinced that nothing but our leathern clothing, furs, and high Russian boots kept us from being frozen to death. But worse was to come, for, in a sudden, fearful squall, the wind flew back right in our teeth, and blew with such terrific violence that it seemed to fall on us like a solid body, driving us helplessly to the earth. So tremendous was the roaring that, while the lightning in a manner surrounded us, the tongues of flame quivering in all directions, the thunder was inaudible, though we could feel the solid rock beneath us vibrating in unison with the chaos in the sky.

By this time, I need hardly say, I had dismounted and was crouching behind a friendly rock, my pony shivering with cold and terror beside me. I was afraid for young Porougine, who, when last I saw him, was just turning an angle of the cliff a short distance in front, which I hoped would give him a little shelter. But it was quite impossible for me to stir hand or foot to help him without risking the certainty of being blown into the abyss below. All I could do was to make my naturally big frame as small as possible in my cranny, and hope that the wind would exhaust its infernal violence before my strength gave out. How long the last supreme gust lasted I shall never know; but just when I thought that the

pressure and cold of the wind must end my life in some way, and in the very crisis of a yet more awful squall, the wind suddenly died away to a dead, unnatural calm—the 'eye of the storm,' as the Spaniards call it—the sky became blue, the sun shone, and nothing seemed to remain of the storm except a very hard bank of cloud all round, the distant droning of the wind, and the crashing of the trees far down in the valleys, as they were uprooted by the passage of the tornado. My ears, suddenly released from the confusion of noises, and perhaps from the removal of the rushing pressure of the wind, seemed unusually sharp, when in the almost painful silence succeeding the dismal uproar of the elements I heard three or four shots in quick succession, an awful scream of human pain, and a series of bestial, inarticulate sounds like very loud quick yapping, deepening into a long-drawn, groaning, horrible sort of laugh. A few stones fell over the edge of the path close to the angle in front of me, followed by Porougine's pony kicking and squealing in an agony of equine terror, as he appeared for an instant, and then plunged, struggling and turning over and over, into the depth below.

For an instant I was startled, the next thankful that, for a time at least, the period of helpless submission to the power of the wind was over, and the opportunity for action had clearly arrived. So, grasping my rifle, which lay on the ground beside me, I opened the 'cut-off,' felt the sight carefully to see that it was adjusted for close quarters, and hurried to the front to find out what had become of my companion. As I ran it instantly flashed across my mind why the spot had seemed so familiar, for I remembered our dear old naval surgeon's account of his search for fossils during the expedition of '54, and Doctor Koltzoff's story of the unfortunate Aleut hunter. I ran, and recollecting simultaneously his vivid description both of the incident and the scene of the tragedy, concluded we were very near the same spot, and felt great comfort in the thought of the ten excellent reasons lying ready in the magazine of my rifle to prevent any enemy, human or animal, from coming to close quarters. Poor Kotick Porougine was lying huddled up near the entrance of a rocky chasm that ran nearly horizontally inwards, close to the angle of the cliff near which I had last seen him, his rifle by him all bent up and twisted, with a thin thread of smoke curling up from the muzzle. A little smoke hung about in bluish layers, and the scent of fired gunpowder tainted the air. He was on his face, breathing heavily and giving an occasional low moan, but otherwise quite quiet and insensible; not very much blood came from him. I expected an immediate attack; but there was apparently nothing else in the cave, though of this I was not sure, as, although I could not see well after coming out of the light of day, I felt that most disagreeable sensation of a presence in the dark-

ness which is so unpleasant at the best of times. Striking a match and lighting a short piece of candle I had by chance put into my haversack—for in the heavy, calm air this was now quite easy—I placed it some little way farther in on the floor of the cave than we were, so as to be between us and whatever it was that had attacked Porougine, and then proceeded to examine him as closely as a rather limited acquaintance with surgery would permit. I saw that the worst injuries were a bad compound fracture of the thigh, a broken wrist, and some very grave injuries to the head and face. And again I remembered the story of Ivan, for I saw that these injuries were very similar to his. Keeping one eye on the inside of the cave, and my rifle close at hand, I poured a little spirit down the throat of the injured man, after turning him on his back; then, binding up his head, which was much torn, I set the wrist temporarily, and, covering him up, made him as comfortable as possible, and sat down alongside to watch. I had barely finished, when the wind came back with, if possible, more violence than before. The candle was blown out, and I was in absolute darkness—for the sky suddenly grew as black as pitch—alone with the poor, wounded, broken heap at my side, which depended upon me, his comrade, for help and protection.

Alone! Was I alone? Outside, the storm was again raging in furious melody, and Nature, as if in an epileptic fit, was striving to rend and shatter and destroy. Inside, two insignificant human beings—one almost at death's door, the other much battered and miserably cold, but both partly sheltered by the shape of the entrance from the blast and from the snow now falling, instead of hail, and piling up wherever it was not waltzing madly round before the eddies of wind at the mouth of the cave. Determined to protect the injured man from any further attacks, I lay down on my face, holding my rifle pointing to the interior of the cave, tried the action, felt the cartridge in the chamber of the weapon, and waited rather anxiously for the next move. I was hoping that the other two, as soon as the storm subsided, might come up and find us, when I thought the best plan would be for one to stay with me and watch Kotick Porougine, as I was inclined to believe that it would do him more harm than good to move him without medical assistance. The third might then go back for Dr Koltzoff and more assistance.

Then I remembered that the animal which had killed Ivan was probably the same which had disabled Kotick. What could it be? A bear, possibly? No, hardly that, as the description was so unlike that of a bear's attack. Bears don't throw a man about; nor were the sounds like anything I had ever heard or read of as emanating from the throat of a bear, or, in fact, any other

animal. It sounded more like the onslaught of one of the very large felines; but I was sure, or at any rate believed, that none existed in Kamchatka. Again I remembered the extraordinary stories of witchcraft which freely circulated among the superstitious Russians. Was it—could it be—something supernatural? The shocking injuries, the twisted rifle, indicated a power, an energy, greater, I fancied, than that of the tiger, the strongest of all the feline tribe. Man? No. Too much strength. At any rate, I should soon know now, for at some little distance beyond where my blown-out candle lay I saw the stealthy glow of two dull-red eyes, scintillating, intermittent as the lids closed over them occasionally. The eyes were more than four feet higher than mine, as I lay on the ground deadly still, so that if it were a beast of prey it was a very large one. Was it fancy, or could I hear the breathing of a huge animal? Probably fancy, as the turmoil of the storm raging outside was almost deafening. Deep down I felt my heart beating, for the awe of the supernatural was on me—that feeling most of us have experienced when alone after dark in some uncanny spot. How long this duel of the eyes lasted I cannot say; but at any rate, raising my rifle silently, I fired as nearly as the darkness would permit at them, and instantly I was aware of the same snapping, snarling, hideous howling as I had heard when poor Kotick screamed. Something huge rushed at me. I fancied I saw an immense pair of jaws, with long tusks in them, just below the eyes; a fearful roaring sound seemed to strike the drums of my ears. I saw a million stars, and then I remember no more.

When I came to myself I was again in bed at Porougine's Hotel, with my head singing like a tea-kettle, bandaged, and in great pain, good Doctor Koltzoff near me, and Zaporoff not far off. They told me that, thanks to the Doctor's grand hound, they had tracked us to the pass leading to the Velvet Mountain, where, at a very considerable height, they had found us close to where an avalanche, or perhaps a landslip, had taken place. We were lying side by side; my rifle was close to me, and on examination they discovered two cartridges had been fired; but Kotick's was gone. The landslip had uncovered the bedrock, which was of very old formation and full of the fossils of large mammalia. They mentioned nothing of any cave, but said they had found a large fossil close to my head, with some of my hair adhering to it, and, from the size and weight of the stone, if my skull had not been fractured it ought to have been—which I felt to be a doubtful compliment. Kotick was doing as well as possible; temperature very little above normal, pulse good, and so on, with other doctor's details. His poor little wife had gone nearly wild with grief when he came back, but, after the first outburst, had settled down as an excellent nurse. After a few

days, during which the medical officer of the *Desirée* was unremitting in his attention to young Porouquine and myself, I was able to board that good ship at Tareinski anchorage, and the officer of the watch who met me as I went over the side said, 'We thought of you on the —th, as we knew you were among the mountains, and could see a well-marked thunderstorm going on there, with very brilliant lightning and detached shreds of cloud revolving round the central column with immense velocity. Were you in it?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'we did have a breeze, in which you may see I rather came to grief. Did you have anything here?' 'No; in fact, it was a very fine day, except for that local thunderstorm, which appeared to hang about the hills.' As I hate a fuss, nothing more was said at the time; but while breakfasting with my friend Donetski, a Russian priest of the Greek Church, he declared—and I believe even to this day declares—that we were attacked by a demon of the hills who had often destroyed hunters near the Velvet Mountain, and that the mark of the cross on the tip of my bullets enabled them to be effective. He said it was a well-known fact that Finnish sorcerers could at will raise a tempest sufficient to swamp a ship: how much more, therefore, could such a specimen of the art-magic as the one who had tried to kill us! He rounded off his remarks by mentioning that roubles, when properly applied to Church purposes, were the best counter-spell with which he happened to be acquainted. Old Porouquine is a reticent man, but supported the Orthodox Church on the whole in the supernatural theory laid down by the priest.

Doctor Koltzoff is puzzled, and reserves his opinion; but the fact that struck him most was the remarkable similarity between the injuries of Ivan and Kotick to each other, and to those inflicted by a huge feline animal seizing and playing with its victim. Kotick does not seem to clearly remember what happened, and, I am glad to say, only shows by a slight limp what he has gone through. He stoutly maintains that he did not recognise that part of the pass in which we were caught by the storm, though when we first entered it he thought it was the pass he had always used previously. In this I am inclined to support him, as I rather imagine there were two landslips or avalanches, the first of which we could neither see nor hear because of the tornado, while the second swept away the cave and its formidable denizen, the latter being buried in the débris.

In the ordinary course of duty I was relieved and came home; and one night, when my friend Baiesault, of the Geological Society, was dining at my house, I told him the story, described the dim outline of the animal, or whatever it was, that had rushed at me, especially dwelling on the shape of the distended jaws and the size and shape of the

fangs, the latter of which had impressed me as very remarkable, and showed him the large and heavy fossil that had struck me on the head. He mused silently a short time, and then asked me to describe again minutely what I had seen; then, borrowing my coal-hammer, knocked off some large fragments from the fossil. Embedded between the eyes of what was clearly the fossilised head of some large carnivorous mammal was a *Lee-Metford .303 bullet, cross-cut at the tip*; another one had glanced from a fang and was buried in the palate. How it could possibly have got there was extraordinary, as the mouth was closed before he had used the hammer. 'That head,' said Baiesault, 'belongs to a long-extinct antediluvian animal, the Arctic or sabre-toothed tiger.'

Somewhat later I received a letter that was addressed in a very foreign-looking hand, and for which I had to pay extra postage. It was forwarded from Yokohama, where it had been posted by the captain of a Behring Sea sealing-schooner. It was from Kotick, written for him in English by an official of the Great Fur Seal Company at Petropaulski. He still thinks a great deal of a new rifle I sent him, and of pretty Olga, his wife; but also of something else, as he has asked me to be sponsor to his first boy. He is not even now at all sure what attacked him, but proposes in his future bear-hunts to steer clear of the Velvet Mountain.

TO THE POET THOMAS GRAY.

(Died 30th July 1771.)

SERENE and lovely Voice, too seldom heard!
Thy solitary note forsakes the crowd
Of eager singers, that with pipings loud
Fill the resounding Day. Like Night's fond bird,
Alone thou singest when the woods are stirred
With quiet-breathing airs; till, softly bowed,
The bright Moon slips her shoulder from a cloud
And leans, rapt listener to each melting word.

Most tender, melancholy, studious, sad!
Thou hadst no Mate to answer to thy call;
No tears to drop with thine, if thine did fall;
No laughter in thy home to make thee glad.
But on thy peaceful grave fit wreaths are hung,
Low sleeping where thy sweetest song was sung.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

By JULIAN CROSKY.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IT seems an easy thing to write a tale about Chinamen for one who, from residence in their country, may be supposed to know the 'local colour.' But in reality nothing could be harder; no character lends itself less readily to the demands of fiction than the Chinese character. A story, to be interesting, requires life, emotion; it requires the palpitation of humanity in its incidents, and the colour of a life which is immediately recognised as real. But Chinese life, in its externals, is unreal, grotesque, a puppet-show; and the Chinese character is bafflingly devoid of emotion. It is, then, but a wooden story I can tell. Its tragedy is deep enough to me; but to you it will seem but a tragedy with the tragic part left out. I am sorry for this, for it is a confession of failure at the outset. I do not love the fiction which is mere photography, and yet here I feel myself reduced to the rôle of printing a blurred photograph from a faded negative.

Wang Lai-chee was my servant; after the European fashion, I called him Wang, although, correctly, if you presume to be familiar with a Chinaman, you should call him by his second name. Wang was a quiet, gentle, persevering man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance. He was a Hunanese, but his family had moved to Kiang-si, his father (now dead) having been a runner in the service of the late governor of Nau-chang, who was also a Hunan man; in China a high official cannot hold office in his own province. Two of Wang's brothers were employed in the Nau-chang porcelain works; Wang had been a designer there also, and had afterwards set up a small curio-shop in Kiu-kiang, which is the treaty-port of Kiang-si. I had bought up most of the contents of Wang's shop, and he had been promptly robbed of my payment by his father-in-law; he then entered

my service as 'boy' and curio-buyer, a position which he did not fulfil entirely to my satisfaction from a business point of view, because he knew too much about porcelain. A Chinaman who understands china will not buy modern trash, and would be ashamed to haggle over the price of an antique. A European, on the other hand, who supplies the European market knows that nothing but modern trash will go down as antique in Europe, and he has to get it cheap to cover his expenses. I was acting at that time, in conjunction with other mysterious businesses, as buyer for a curio firm.

But all this is by the way, and has nothing to do with the story. If I mention Wang's antecedents, it is simply because, in a Chinese story, I feel that nothing can convey verisimilitude except a bald statement of facts.

Now, this is the beginning of the tale. One night during the war the natives of Kiu-kiang were growing restless. The anti-foreign feeling, which is always the first inflammation when the national pride gets sick, was exhibiting itself strongly in 'foreign-devil' cries from a crowd down below on the foreshore. If there is one port more than another that is safe on the Yang-tze, it is Kiu-kiang; for here the Customs staff, under a stiff-necked commissioner and a reckless young ex-militia assistant, played bayonet and sabre pricks with the rabble during the 1890-91 riots (the only way in which British prestige can be maintained in China); here the French exacted a thumping indemnity for the pillage of the unfinished cathedral; and here only the little settlement has always maintained its right to keep and close at night gates at either end of the Concession Bund, which preserves to Europeans one cool promenade in summer. If you would understand the inestimable boon of such gates, you need not go as far as the first 'Concession' on the Yang-tze—Chin-kiang; you will see in our

own crown colony of Hong-kong how little room there is for the Englishman on the side-walk where Chinese are allowed equal rights. They literally jostle you off your own road; and in the Concessions, where the sombre Sikh police are not in evidence as they are at Hong-kong, they not only monopolise the only decent promenade on the river-front, but spit behind you as you pass.

But if Kiu-kiang thus preserves the haughty *jus Britannicum*, it is on that account the more dangerous when the native feeling rises to the gate-breaking point. Nowhere are Europeans more cordially hated as a body, and nowhere are they more isolated and numerically weak. The only *raison d'être* of the settlement, the tea-trade, has virtually disappeared, and it is two or three days from the nearest gunboat at Shanghai. I was thus anxious for my valuable stock of curios, and wanted Wang to take the more precious pieces to his home in the native city at the back until the trouble should be over. I had rung the bell several times, and not one of my servants had answered.

The kitchen-coolies' quarters were in a detached outhouse at the back, and I went out into the veranda to call. To my great alarm, I perceived that one end of the low building was on fire. 'Boy!' I shouted. There was no answer. Not a man was to be seen. But I noticed through the rice-paper windows that a light was burning in Wang's room. I rushed down and broke into the rickety apartment. Wang was sitting there alone, in a flap-eared cap, his hands tucked into his sleeves, his thick-soled boots shuffling a little on the brick floor to keep his feet warm, bending over a stool, and intently considering an array of marble draughts on a black-and-white chess-board.

'What on earth are you doing, Wang?' I cried, kicking the stool over and shaking his shoulder. 'Don't you know the kitchen is on fire, you bat-eared Archimedes? Come out at once.'

Wang rose and looked at me in piteous dismay. 'Oh master,' he said reproachfully, 'I little time makey finish the thirteen squares! Now I must to begin again.'

'Maskee, never too late for that,' I replied cheerfully; 'but can be too late to stop fire. *Sao hsieh!* Makey fill bucket from *kang*, bring me.'

I hurried him out to the water *kangs*—big stoneware tubs daily filled from the river for domestic consumption—and, seizing one of the pair of buckets standing hard by, with the water-coolie's yoke lying over them, I managed to get the fire under. I then assisted Wang to pick up his scattered draughtsmen, and told him to bring his board and box of clothes upstairs, in case of another attempt to fire the sheds. I ascertained that the cook (*mafoo*) and coolies were all out with the crowd, and probably one of them had upset a *chatty* among some shavings on purpose.

After carefully packing my more valuable pieces in Wang's pigskin trunk, I sent him out to reconnoitre in the crowd, while I remained on guard at the gate of my bungalow. He presently returned, and reported that all chance of a riot was over, as the down-steamer from Hankow was in sight over the bend, and the Customs staff was under arms patrolling the bund. It is one of the anomalies of life in the outports that the sole practical protection of European property depends on Sir Robert Hart's cosmopolitan civil service, which is wholly in Chinese employment, with no other obligation towards white men than the sterling Anglo-Saxon blood bond—a bond far stronger than discipline; for on entering the service you are required in set terms to forego your national allegiance where it conflicts with your allegiance to the service. I believe that the staffs at every port are now provided with a stand of rifles, and they are ready to use them to preserve order; the British Consulates are sometimes equipped with an ancient rack of Sniders, but the British consul would risk his position if he were to do anything so repugnant to Foreign Office red-tape as to serve them out. Things are changing now, however, thank goodness! It is no pleasant thing to belong to the one great Power the effect of whose policy is to make its subjects 'lose face' in the presence of Chinamen, with whom 'face'—prestige—is a far more powerful weapon than gunboats. But, with our blood-brother Americans taking a hand in the game, we are going to change all that. We are going to teach Chinamen that their old friends are still their best friends, but that they must be respected. It is only necessary to hammer that lesson into them as a nation, and all will go very well. The Chinese are good business partners when prejudice is removed.

'Now, Wang,' said I, 'talky my what fashion thing that 13-square game?'

'Belong *wei-ch'i* [way-chee], master,' Wang replied; 'but I think you no can understand. All dis year I you boy, I learn to play with 13-square; to-night I just have finish when you makey bobbery. Now I must begin again; take velly long time, no can play only night-time.'

I shall drop the troublesome pidgin dialogue to explain as briefly as I can the upshot of Wang's statement. He was presumptuously attempting to learn the great game of *wei-ch'i*, the holiest of holies for the most erudite intellects of the empire, which I suppose no non-'literate' save the patient, studious, and withal astonishingly ambitious Wang has ever so much as attempted. I suppose you have read some description of the game; if not, then the sinologues who have recently undertaken to instruct us in things Chinese have singularly neglected their duty, for *wei-ch'i* is more characteristic, more bound up with the genius of the nation, than any other Celestial amusement—their interminable dramas and classical examinations not excepted. To call *wei-ch'i* an amusement is an

audacious irony; *wei-ch'i* is a science. Whist and chess are frivolous by its side; you may learn chess in a year, and be able to play whist in two years; but at the end of a lifetime the utmost a great scholar would venture to say of *wei-ch'i* would be that he had begun to know that he knew nothing. It is only comparable to the Chinese language itself.

Wei-ch'i is played on a board containing 324 squares, formed by 19 lines crossing 19 others at right-angles, thus making 361 points of intersection; 300 'men' are used, moving along the points of intersection—150 black and 150 white. One move at a time is made by placing a piece on a point. The winner is the one who surrounds the greater number of points with his own men, surrounds an empty point, or a point occupied by the enemy, who is then removed. At the corners and along the sides a point can be secured finally; but in the centre of the board there is always the danger of a besieging army being besieged by a greater one. An adaptation of the game has been imported into Europe; but for some reason or other it is child's-play. *Wei-ch'i* is not child's-play. At chess twenty minutes to half-an-hour is sometimes allowed for a single move; at *wei-ch'i* one move an hour is playing recklessly, like a novice. Towards the end of the game players will sit and look at the board for a whole day, at the end of which 'white' puts down a checker. Then he suffers a night of remorse and agony, knowing he has made a mistake. The Anglo-Saxon race probably does not produce more than one intellect in a generation capable of entertaining all the possible combinations dependent on a single move; the Mongolian race produces about a hundred in one generation. The patience, memory, and expansive retentiveness of mental retina required

for the study is made and not born. When the Chinese system of education, of committing thousands of alphabetical symbols and tomes of recondite philosophy to memory, is abolished in favour of modern science, *wei-ch'i* will be relegated to the limbo of lost arts. It is an intricate game.

Wang was not a 'literate'—that is to say, a man who had studied for the public civil service examinations, and who, although these examinations are open to all, is generally the descendant of a generation of 'literates,' inheriting the initial order of brain required for mnemonic studies. Although China is in theory the ideal democracy, the necessity for the artificial brain of heredity is the reason that the 'literati' have grown into a distinct caste of aristocrats. Every year a few outsiders creep in; but they are immediately absorbed and assimilated, and do not make new blood in the ancient order of obstacles. In spite of his birth and poverty, however, Wang had acquired a knowledge of his own language which for common uses equalled that of a graduate. But, beginning at the beginning, as he did, he had to conquer everything by perseverance—an excellent type of the Chinese nation at large, and a microcosm of its narrow, steadfast growth. *Wei-ch'i*, likewise, he therefore began at the beginning. He commenced with a board of 11 lines; when he had mastered the combinations of 100 squares, he added another line on each side, which gave him 121 squares, and so on. I had just interrupted him in his study of the 13-square (14-line) board containing 196 points of intersection, which was still little more than half-way to the combinations of the full board. He had been practising on this, as he said, during the year he had been in my service; the game which I upset had taken him two months.

THE CONVICT-CAPITAL OF DARTMOOR.

By W. SCOTT KING.



PRINCETOWN, or—to cling to the older form—Prince's Town, the convict-capital of Dartmoor, possesses three unique claims to notoriety: its desolate situation, its romantic past history, and its terrible present-day associations. To be more explicit, Princetown is the highest town in England, and by far the most outlandish and inaccessible; on the granite-strewn wastes surrounding it cluster the stone remains of the Phœnician and Norse traders and colonists who came here for tin when the world was young; and to-day it is the 'long home' of some nine hundred of our convicts.

When this unparalleled assemblage of interests is remembered, and also Princetown's growing reputation as a resort for consumptives, it is not

to be wondered at that every summer its snug little hotels are crowded with artists, antiquaries, folklorists, criminologists, and patients. The strange little town is located in the innermost wilds of that vast and mysterious tract of country, half mountain and half moor, known as Dartmoor, or the Forest of Dartmoor, and is called with literal accuracy, though half in jest, its metropolis. On every side of it lie thousands of untilled acres of moorland, in the summer-time golden with the broom-plant, but always desolate and rocky, save where the treacherous bogs and morasses blacken its surface, or isolated peat-cutters' cottages peep from among its boulder stones.

The traveller to whom this lozenge-shaped wilderness is unfamiliar would probably be inclined to call it a mountain-range rather than a moor

when first he sees it, for steep black hills rise one behind the other like so many gigantically-curved waves to the misty horizon, each one surmounted with a rugged granite headland, or tor, as it is called, having the appearance of a crumbling feudal castle. Here is the birthplace, 'unknown, untrod,' of fourteen rivers and a hundred brooks and streams, principal of which are the Dart, which gives its name to the whole moor, and which rises in that elusive morass, Crammere Pool, and the Teign, the Tamar, the Tavy, the Plym (hence Plymouth), and the Walkham.

Whatever conclusion archæologists and antiquaries may come to as to its having once been a classic seat of Druidical worship or a settlement of Phœnician tin-traders, Dartmoor will ever remain one of the most ancient and significant landmarks of prehistoric days, and a happy hunting-ground for the tourist, the painter, and the collector of fairy-tale and legend. But our present interest is not in its 'sacred circles' or 'rock-altars,' nor yet in its mischievous 'pixies' and ghostly 'wist-hounds' which are still said to lure the traveller from his path and haunt the moor after nightfall, but in Princetown, the austere, granite-built capital.

After five or six miles of steep white road have been traversed on the way from romantic little Tavistock, and the quaint Merivale Bridge and storied 'Dartmoor Inn' passed, the traveller, from the top of his jolting coach, begins to observe a change passing over the face of the tracts around him. Well-built and cemented walls now mark the limits of the road; grazing meadows, of unlooked-for richness and colour, lie right and left; while wheat and roots of various kinds are seen growing in comparative abundance. Then he knows—or, if he does not, his driver will be sure to help his intelligence—that he is nearing the convict-city. In addition to this, it is more than likely that a military-looking warder (they are usually old army men) with gun and bayonet will be seen patrolling behind some stone wall, over which he constantly casts a vigilant eye upon the black-arrowed gang hoeing potatoes or tossing hay with their hands in the fields beyond. Or, quite as probably, the coach will be abruptly drawn to the left to allow a small regiment of close-cropped men in blue-and-yellow jackets to pass. Continuing the drive, the road now winds beneath the tall Lookout Tower, which is crowned by a powerful telescope and signalling apparatus, to be called into use immediately upon the sounding of the great prison-bell which announces that some prisoner has made a dash for his liberty.

After driving through a long avenue of trees, whose presence upon the bleak uplands represents years of careful culture, the prison-farm is passed on the right, and a hundred yards lower down on the left the cyclopean gateway of the prison itself. The most exalted town in England has

now been reached, and, it may interest some to know, the wettest also. King Charles II. is reported to have said that if it was raining anywhere in his humid kingdom it was 'sure to be raining in Tavistock.' This royal libel might be made with much greater propriety on Princetown, seven miles distant. The town is nearly a century old. It was built in 1806 at the direction of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, who was warden of the Stanaries or tin-stamping towns of those days, and the *alter ego* of the Prince Regent, and he named it after his royal master. The first erection was the prison, or the prisons, as it is customary to call them, which were built to accommodate the French prisoners taken in the great war then raging with Napoleon, and who were said to be literally rotting in the old, insanitary hulks at Plymouth. These prisoners of war seem to have carried away with them very exaggerated ideas of their surroundings, anathematising Dartmoor as a veritable Siberia, covered with snow seven months out of the twelve. M. Cotel said: 'For seven months it is a *vraie Sibérie*, covered with melting snow, and as soon as its snow goes away the mists appear. Imagine the tyranny of *perfidie Albion* in sending human beings to such a place.'

But, notwithstanding these climatic drawbacks, their fate was less unkind than that of many an Englishman pining in damp Gallic cells. Their parole admitted them to a free range over several miles of moorland, as well as, in the case of the officers, residences in Okehampton, Tavistock, and other neighbouring towns. In addition to this, many of them were invited to the houses of the hospitable west-country families, who pitied the captivity of the vanquished Gaul. The very inscription over the stern old gateway, taken from Virgil, '*Parcere subjectis*'—to spare the vanquished—testifies to the consideration which these involuntary exiles received at the hands of 'perfidious Albion.' How this inscription is to be interpreted in the light of the present use to which the prison is put it is not easy to say, though many who stand to read it think it has reference to the fact that a number of the present inmates are here through having their death-sentence commuted to imprisonment for life, they having been 'spared' the gallows. At the back of the prisons is a pretty and well-tended little cemetery, where many of the foreigners who did not live till the close of the war were buried. Some years ago it had fallen into decay, but a recent governor caused it to be replanted and enclosed, for which gracious act he received the thanks of the French Government.

There is one other memorial of their stay on Dartmoor, and that is the church, built by the side of 'the long unlovely street' by these compulsory visitors, and for which labour, it is well to add, they received remuneration. Its bare tower is to-day a conspicuous landmark for many miles across the moor. Besides a very imposing marble memorial celebrating the benef

cence of the founders of Princetown, the church contains a curious little mural tablet, 'To the memory of three Guardsmen who perished in the snow upon the moor, preferring obedience to their officer to life itself.' So runs the inscription. At the rear are the long rows of stoneless grass mounds which cover the unhonoured resting-places of the convicts who have died during the last fifty years.

The erection of the prisons cost £100,000; but when peace was declared in 1816 they became empty, and remained so till 1850, save when spasmodic attempts were made at utilising them as a factory for the extraction of naphtha from peat. In 1850 they became what they are to-day—our chief convict settlement.

But before anything further is said of the prison and the penal régime, one more object of great importance and picturesqueness connected with Princetown claims at least a reference. This is the far-famed moorland railway. As early as 1823 there was a horse tramway constructed between King Tor, the seat of Sir Thomas above mentioned, and Plymouth, for the conveyance of granite; and of this the poet Carrington has sung:

Lo! along the iron way
The rocks gigantic slide; the peasant views,
Amazed, the masses of the wild moor move
Swift to the destined port.

Upon part of this old tramway the modern railway has been laid, and train should be taken from Yelverton, where the line leaves the Great Western system, when the traveller will be drawn up by a panting engine to its terminus, fourteen hundred feet above sea-level, and will then be able fully to appreciate its extraordinary S-curves and wonderful moorland scenery. The line at times doubles upon itself in its climbing efforts to escape the almost perpendicular tors. As you rise among the hills you see a miniature railway far below, and inquire what it is. 'That is what you have just passed over' is the answer. 'And what is the railway coiling the hills above?' 'Oh, that is where you are now going' is the not quite reassuring reply. And so, among black blocks of grim-looking granite, and past green patches of bogland set in purple heather, mounts the little train, until, without any warning, the flank of Hessory Tor is turned, and it glides with triumph into Princetown Station.

Strange indeed does it seem that so wonderful and at times supremely enchanting a country should surround, and so romantic a railway lead to, a spot where centre the accumulated horrors of a thousand crimes—a spot in which one can never quite shake off the feeling of being one's self a prisoner. The stony-hearted 'city' chills the soul even on the hottest day and when neither armed warders nor sweating gangs are in sight. When the first inhabitants settled in Princetown, Carrington chanted of the coming moor-cultivation

which should 'bid the cheerful grass wave in the upland gale, and harvests bless the renovated wastes.' In some small measure the poetic prophecy has been verified. In dry weather those of the prisoners who are physically equal to such labour are marched off in companies of twenty and thirty, under the care of four warders, to the adjacent marshes, which they drain and cultivate with surprisingly good results. The less robust and the old and infirm are employed in the manufacture of baskets, boots, and post-bags for the army and postal service. To-day there are in residence nearly nine hundred men, who are attended by between two and three hundred warders. Every man has a cell of his own, lighted by a small window by day and an outside lamp at night. Books are allowed to any extent, if approved by the chaplain, and some are omnivorous readers of history, travel, and fiction. Each man is shaved once a week by a prisoner known to be an ex-barber, though for a razor he is only permitted to use a species of small-toothed clipper. Three months before liberation, however, beards are allowed to be grown, as one slight help in concealing from coming employers a disqualifying past life. The prison fare consists of three meals a day: a pint of tea and half a loaf of bread for breakfast, eleven ounces of roast beef or mutton and a pound of potatoes for dinner, and half a loaf and a pint of cocoa for supper. For his dress the convict wears a dull-yellow cap of the 'Scotch' order, upon which a brass letter is fastened, one letter for each period of servitude the wearer has endured. It is no uncommon thing to meet in the streets of Princetown men with five or even six of such tell-tale decorations. The thick rough jacket and trousers are of the same yellowish hue; but after a year or two the 'good conduct' men are privileged to exchange these for garments of dark-blue and a red collar. The warders tell you that a favourite form of petty insubordination is to tear to pieces these yellow suits, the punishment for which is that the 'tiger' appears in the quarry next day arrayed in board-like black canvas.

This is not the place to offer suggestions as to possible and needed reforms in the penal system, nor yet to advance some impossible ideal of remedial servitude in the place of the present one. Still, one or two features of the convict's life on Dartmoor may be noticed with disfavour. First, there is the oft-condemned 'cellular' system. When not at work—work is his salvation here, as possibly it might have been before he came—the convict leads an absolutely solitary life—a life of deadness, hopeless loneliness, and silence, broken only by the tramp of the sentry in the long corridor without or the howl of the moorland wind. This is calculated to eat out men's hearts, break down their spirits, and ruin them, as it so frequently does, both in mind and body. Again, there is the everlasting surveillance—goad-

ing, maddening surveillance—more than sufficient, as cases innumerable prove, to provoke to insanity and desperation. If a prisoner carries a pail of milk from the cow-shed down the road, a warder is behind and before him, and he might easily smell the gun-metal; if he drags a trolly of stone or tosses a field of hay he is within a three yards' range of half-a-dozen musket-barrels; while every ten minutes throughout the long night, as the storm-fiend shrieks over his rocky 'home,' an inspecting eye glares in upon him through a hole in his cell-door. In one word, while fully realising the paralysing difficulty of the task imposed on the authorities, Dartmoor can hardly be said to be an ideal penitentiary, seeing that from the day he goes in to the day he comes out—and twenty years may lie between those days—not one solitary effort but the dreary hour's service on Sunday afternoon is made to instruct, improve, or redeem the convict. Dartmoor Prison is absolutely a *penal* settlement and nothing more.

Of course all the inmates belong to the Cistercian brotherhood—they live, if not under a vow, under a rule of perpetual silence. In honesty it must be said, however, that recently this rule has been but laxly enforced, owing to the reluctance of the warders to spend all their time in shouting out, 'Now, shut up there, will you!' But in the general observance of this rule of silence lies to a very large extent the safety and lives of the warders, and, indeed, the possibility of the working of the whole penal system as now conducted. Could the men freely converse, concerted action among them would then be easy, and no doubt constant, which would make it impossible for three or four or even half-a-dozen warders to be put in charge of the large gangs of prisoners; almost every convict would then require a caretaker. As it is, if an escape is attempted it is almost invariably limited to one man, and therein lies at once the safety of the warder and the failure of the attempt. If twenty men could plan an instantaneous 'bolt,' their guards would be wholly insufficient to stop them. At the same time, in most mysterious and round-about ways, they do manage to get news of the day, money, tobacco, and to plot, in twos and threes, for united insurrections. For example, the most daring and successful 'leap for liberty' which Dartmoor Prison has known occurred little more than a year ago, and one feature of it was made great capital of by the local and London press. About three o'clock in the afternoon a gang of twenty convicts, while working out on the moor, became suddenly enveloped in a characteristic Dartmoor mist. Three warders were in charge of the party, and the chief of these at once ordered a 'fall-in' and a 'march!' On coming within sight of the prison three men suddenly bounded out of the ranks and vanished into the fog. Fortunately for the fugitives the rest of the men had to be safely marched to their

cells before the alarm could be given, and fortunately for the warders five or six of these were within a few weeks of being liberated, and consequently were not likely to forfeit their twenty-five per cent. reduction of term by aiding their comrades, much less by following their example. The fate of the three was both comic and tragic. One was soon overtaken by the horsemen, and while leaping a low wall was shot dead. The rule is that a fugitive must be called to three times before he is fired upon, and then only his lower limbs are aimed at. Our readers will remember the severe censure which the press next day passed on the authorities for this disaster. Undoubtedly it was due to an accident that the shot proved a fatal one. No. 2 wandered about the moor for days, unable to find his way or to get anything to eat, and finally gave himself up to a farmer, who marched him back to Princetown and claimed the five pounds reward.

The fate of the third was more romantic. He wandered for six miles over the frozen moor, then crossing the old Roman bridge, he came in the early dawn of Christmas morning to the little hamlet of Pool Bridge. Here he broke into the dining-room of a Quaker gentleman's house; and, as the appearance of the room testified next morning to the astonished maid, helped himself generously to the good things with which the family had been celebrating the festive eve. Going into the hall, he exchanged his tell-tale cap for a silk hat, and his yellow jacket for a fashionable Chesterfield overcoat of convenient length. An umbrella and a pair of kid gloves completed his costume. But whether his sampling of the Christmas fare had been 'too well' or not, when he left the house in the early morning he foolishly set his face back towards Princetown; nor did he discover what he had done till a warder rode by and inquired of the fashionably-dressed gentleman whether he had 'seen anything,' and the tower of the church came into view. Terrified, he struck away to the right, and hid throughout Christmas Day upon the moor. Afterwards, it is current in Princetown, where the doings of that Christmas Eve are still much discussed, he confessed that many times he lay down among the rocks and bushes as he saw the glasses of the search-party pointed in his direction. When night fell he came to Tavistock, where he broke into a house at the back of the one in which this account is being written. Ultimately he got clear away from the dangerous neighbourhood to Devonport, and would undoubtedly now be beyond the water but for a most trivial and foolish failure of his discretion. Walking along a road in the outskirts of the seaport he met a policeman, who was accompanied by a small terrier dog. The constable nodded 'good-morning' and passed on; but his dog turned round and, as little dogs will do, began snuffing at the convict's heels. He, not daring to look round, imagined that he was being

followed, and immediately set off to run. The policeman turned to look for his dog, found it in hot pursuit, and of course joined in the chase. Capture followed easily, and number whatever he was soon found himself back at Princetown.

The most celebrated escape of the past, and, it is said, the only one which was finally successful, dates from many years ago, when a convict lived for three weeks in a peat-cutter's cottage, almost under the shadow of the prison walls. The grandmother who lived in the house was dangerously ill; but when the warders came to search the house she got up from her bed and gave it, together

with her night-cap, to the convict, who most successfully sustained the rôle of an asthmatical old woman of ninety. When the excitement had subsided he quietly left the house at night in the peat-cutter's clothes and escaped to America.

Every Tuesday morning some of the convicts are usually seen on the platform of the South-Western at Tavistock, but clothed and bearded, and, it is to be hoped, in their right mind. They are on their way to Pentonville Prison, where they will be photographed; and then, with two pounds in their pockets, they will once more taste the sweets of life and freedom.

THE LOST CAUSE.

A ROMANCE.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, Author of *The Rebel Commodore*, *An Unauthorised Intervention*, &c.

CHAPTER VI.—MY LORD IS ENIGMATICAL.

KENNETT must have recognised my lord at the same moment; for I heard him swearing softly under his breath, but could only guess his thoughts. For myself, I was not quite at ease. The Secretary's penetration and shrewd humour, veiled by a manner almost child-like, are yet remembered at Westminster; and at his best, as he was then, he was not one with whom any man burdened with a secret cared to bandy words. Now, as he briskly advanced, his smile would have disarmed the suspicions of a Jesuit—if they had met for the first time. One thing was rather surprising. For an invalid, my lord's movements were wonderfully alert and active.

'So you're there, Holroyd!' he cried, holding my hand affectionately. 'Well, such adventures fall only to the young. And your wound—eh?'

'A mere scratch! . . . Then your lordship got my letter?'

'An hour or two ago'—

So late? Noting the fact, I could not forbear a glance at Kennett. But he was standing with his eyes fixed on the ground, and a brow as black as a thundery sky.

'And was vastly relieved to have it. I start for London to-morrow afternoon at one, and meant to pick you up by the way. Now you have spared me the trouble. I was told you were here, but'—turning half-inquiringly to Kennett—'not that you had company. You will excuse me if I have interrupted you.'

The hint was plain, and I had no choice but to take it—whatever Kennett might do. So:

'My Lord Kynaston,' said I, 'let me present Mr Kennett of Langbridge, to whom I am indebted for a recent service.'

Both bowed, but Kennett's was of the slightest.

On the other hand, no smile could have been more friendly than my lord's. So friendly was it, indeed, that I began to scent sport.

'Mr Kennett is not unknown to me by name—and repute,' said he in his blandest tones. 'If I am not wrong, sir, you have ambitions of a public life?'

For an instant Kennett was taken aback, and then, 'Your lordship is misinformed,' he replied stiffly.

'Mayhap! mayhap! . . . Well, at the best, 'tis a thankless game. It may even be dangerous, Mr Kennett—for the losers.'

'Yet the luck is not always with the one side,' said the other, recovering himself.

'In my experience, 'tis with the side that holds the best cards, and the worst play is to stake everything on the chance of a *coup*. Better, if an old gamester may advise, to retire quietly—while there is still something to be saved.'

If Kennett suspected the significance underlying all this—and that it had a meaning I doubted not—he was wise enough to hide his feelings, and even to cover his retreat with some credit.

'And your own example, my lord?' he asked.

'Oh! I have played—and play now—because I have usually had the fortune to hold good cards. . . . But we must not keep you, sir. Doubtless you have other work on hand to-night?'

'None that your lordship's counsel would not lighten,' said he, bowing profoundly. Then, to me: 'You will not forget our engagement, Mr Holroyd?'

'I anticipate it with pleasure,' I returned.

He bowed once more, and so withdrew. My lord's eyes followed him to the door.

'A youth of parts!' he remarked, seating himself in the most comfortable chair, and signing to me to take another. 'A friend of yours, George?'

'An acquaintance,' said I. 'In fact, he is one

of the two gentlemen who succoured me after my encounter with the pad.'

'Ah! . . . That was a curious affair—eh? I must get your story to-morrow—I have no time for it now—and when I have leisure, we must see what can be done in the matter. 'Twill never do, egad! to have the King's servants stopped on His Majesty's highway.'

'And the papers?'

'They arrived safe enough—trust that rascal Joseph for that! He had a sound thrashing for his pains. After all, they were barely worth the potter. Do you know, sir, we have been scouring the country in search of you for a couple of days?'

I expressed my gratitude in proper form. 'But surely the importance of the intelligence'—

'Pooh! there was little that I had not learnt already from my own agents—and provided for. Mind, I don't blame your zeal, George. You had not my knowledge, and were quite right to leave nothing to chance. I had the clue, and 'twas child's-play to countermine the little plan of our friends across the water—who are clumsy conspirators at the best. After to-night, I shall be vastly surprised if we hear more of 'em.'

I had no reply to make: the revelation was too unexpected. How much had my lord discovered? Not all, I was sure; for I could scarcely believe that he was acquainted with the outstanding fact of the Chevalier's presence in England. And until the morrow my lips were sealed.

'But that we can also discuss again,' he continued. 'Just now I have only five minutes to spare. The Duchess of Chandos will never forgive me if I am longer absent from the card-table—and her charms. And, by the way,' he said, pausing to take snuff, 'are there any ladies at Langbridge?'

I fell on guard at once. 'That I cannot tell you,' I said. 'But at the Dower-house, where I was so hospitably received, there are two ladies.'

'So you had a pleasant time—eh?' he asked, in his most innocent tones.

'They were very kind to me.'

'And your host—what did you call him in the letter?'

'Morell,' said I.

'An old man, I suppose?'

'Middle-aged, I should think. I saw but little of him.'

He scratched his chin reflectively. 'Morell?' he repeated once or twice. 'Now, I wonder if I know him?'

'I have never seen him in your lordship's company.'

'No? . . . Well, perhaps he is an old acquaintance. I have a fancy that he is, but the name eludes me. . . . In any case, George, you were fortunate to meet him—and Mr Kennett.'

I assented, and hastened to divert the talk into another channel. We were trenching on ground far too perilous for my taste. Luckily I remem-

bered that I had not yet inquired into the state of his health. I did so forthwith.

'Never was better!' he cried cheerily.

'But—the gout?' said I, in some surprise.

He chuckled to himself. 'A little pretext! I had a twinge about Christmas, but, for the rest—between ourselves, George, the gout is a most convenient ailment. The truth is,' he said, beaming confidentially upon me, 'I had a certain affair on hand—you can guess what. 'Twas after my own heart, and I had no mind to be troubled with the fancies and claims of my good colleagues of the Ministry when I could settle it myself, and have some enjoyment into the bargain. Wherefore I stayed in Bath, howling with pain. To-morrow, having recovered sufficiently to travel, I return to London. You take me? . . . But yourself, lad,' said he, with concern—'you look more ill and worn than I care to see. You have not taxed your strength overmuch, I hope?'

I was beginning to feel that I had. Excitement had prevented me doing so hitherto, but now the effects of my exhausting ride made themselves unpleasantly evident. So I admitted to my lord that I was somewhat tired.

He rose immediately. 'Off you go to Combermere House, then!' cried he. 'Get some supper and a bottle of my Rebellion port from Deakin, and I warrant you'll sleep sound. In any event,' he added, with a whimsical glance at my travel-stained riding-suit, 'I could hardly venture to present you to the Duchess in that garb!'

Jesting thus, he accompanied me into the vestibule. A party of ladies and gallants was just arriving, and he drew me aside until the doorway was clear. Then, as we said good-night:

'One thing, George,' he whispered in my ear—'you may go to bed in the full certainty that His Majesty's throne is in no danger for to-night!' and, laughing, he moved off.

For me, as I stepped out and hailed a link-boy—for, my lord's house being at no great distance, 'twas needless to take a chair—I had ample food for thought. Mentally, I was in a fog. Either my chief knew more than I could have deemed possible, and had been quizzing me, or he was resting in a false security. Reviewing our talk, I could not decide which was the more likely; and I was still puzzling myself with conjecture when the thread of my reflections was broken (not too gently) by a most startling incident.

We were walking peaceably on, all-unsuspicious. Suddenly, as we were turning a corner, a sharp whistle sounded; three or four men threw themselves upon us; the link was struck from the boy's grasp and himself tumbled in the road; I was gripped by several pairs of hands, and had barely time to utter a single shout for help before my head was enveloped in a cloth or sack. I struggled my hardest; but, caught un-awares, I had small chance against such odds;

and my strength was failing me when I heard a voice that seemed familiar.

'Curse you! Can't you be quick there?' it cried. 'Drag him on—help's coming!'

But again I was heartened to continue my resistance; and, doing so with every muscle, I managed to hold my own for a moment or two longer. Then, following a chorus of oaths and the thud of blows, I was flung violently against a wall, and thence fell. Barring a scantiness of breath, I was none the worse; and, disentangling my head from the cloth, I picked myself up, helped by the pair of sturdy fellows who had plainly come to my rescue.

'Hope you ain't hurt, sir?' inquired one, touching his cap.

'No—thanks to your promptness. But who are you?'

'His lordship's sedan-chairmen, sir. Sent us to follow you home—in case of accidents, 'e said. Wonder how 'e finds out them things—eh, Bill?'

The link-boy was still on his back, whimpering for mercy; my assailants were disappearing from sight down the street. The whole affair had not lasted two minutes.

'Hadn't you better chase the scoundrels?' I asked.

The chairman shook his head. 'Our orders was to see you safe home, sir,' said he. 'Besides, they're two to one.'

'Let us get on, then.'

Fortunately we were quite near to Combermere House, which was reached without further adventure. Then, after seeing my honest protectors duly rewarded, I was glad to obey my lord's injunctions. But I took to bed with me a new cause of apprehension. I had recognised the voice directing the attack upon me, and I now knew that Kennett and his associates would stick at nothing to achieve their ends.

I was awakened next morning by my lord himself. Although the hour was unwontedly early—'twas not yet nine—he was dressed for the open air.

'Ah! you're looking hugely better,' he remarked as I sat up to greet him. 'Slept like a top, I'll wager? Well, the Rebellion port never fails. And, if you like, you can have another hour or two in bed. I only came up to see if you were fit to travel, and remind you that we start about one o'clock. Until that time I have business that will keep me occupied.'

I made to rise. 'If your lordship needs me'—

'Not a bit! Rather otherwise, to be frank. And, pray, have no anxiety concerning me, George. I may be abroad all morning.'

Then, as my drowsiness cleared away, I remembered that I was now free to speak. I durst not hesitate longer, and so asked him if he could give me ten minutes ere he went.

'Why, not a single minute!' he cried, his eyes

twinkling. 'There is too much to be done before noon, and already I should be at work.'

'But I have information that 'tis of the utmost importance you should hear,' I pleaded.

'Since last night? Well, it must still wait!'

He was moving towards the door, and I grew desperate. 'A moment, my lord! It concerns the Pretender'—

'Oh! if you have been playing with fire,' said he, laughing, 'I must leave the young man on your conscience a little longer—as a punishment. And perhaps,' he added slyly, 'you will do well to bide indoors to-day. After last night's brawl we cannot let you loose again upon the peaceful folks of Bath!'

He was off before I had another opportunity to beg him to listen, and I heard him humming gaily as he descended the stairs. Leaping out of bed, I threw on some clothes with the intent to try once more; but in a minute a shout for his lordship's chair from his steward, Deakin, told me that 'twould be futile. I knew not what to make of the matter, and for the solution must await his return with such patience as I could muster.

In truth, 'twas little enough. The day being fine, my enforced inaction was all the more irksome; the weight of my secret became heavier with every hour's brooding; and I could neither discover my lord's whereabouts nor form a tolerable guess regarding the import of his business. Somehow, however, the forenoon passed. At noon, when Deakin served me with lunch—by order, as he informed me—the Secretary was still absent; and, observing no preparations for departing, I commented upon the fact to the steward.

'My lord travels alone, sir,' was his reply.

'Without the household?'

'We don't go till to-morrow.'

'But surely that is strange?' I suggested.

'I ventured to say so to his lordship, sir,' he answered, with a shrug of his shoulders, 'but he bade me to mind my own affairs and be—You know his way, sir.'

'Doubtless he has an object,' said I, and wondered what on earth it could be.

'Twas nearer two o'clock than one when he appeared at last, bursting in upon me with the announcement that the coach was at the door. Albeit despairing of success, I made a last attempt to effect my purpose. But, as before, he would not hearken.

'What has taken you, man?' he demanded, hurrying me out. 'No more now, if you love me—you can speak to your heart's content as we jog along!'

'Then it may be too late,' I put in.

'Pooh! we can always turn back, I suppose?'

Outside, another shock met me. The coach was there, with its four horses and the couple of postillions. Only, instead of the well-armed servants whom I had expected to see in the

rumble, who should fill it but—Joseph, alone and grinning sheepishly? For one whose life was of such value to the realm, the protection struck me as being absurdly inadequate.

'You are never going on thus, my lord?' I cried.

For answer, he jumped in. 'Why, what is wrong now?' he asked, assuming a look of surprise.

'This,' I persisted—'the roads are heavy, and 'twill be dark long ere we can reach Devizes; that man behind is an arrant coward, and my arm is

useless in the event of a meeting with lawless people; and the danger'—

'Can be faced at the proper time!' said he, more sharply than was his wont. 'If you mean to get in at all, George'—

Having made my protest, I could but obey. Then the door was shut and the word given; and, sped by a cheer from the little crowd of idlers who had gathered round, we clattered off on the journey that was to prove so momentous.

COFFEE-CULTURE IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

By ROWLAND W. CATER, Author of *Out with the India-rubber Gatherers*,
Banana-growing for the Markets, *In Quest of Mahogany*, &c.



COFFEE is, and has been for years past, one of the principal articles of export from each of the five Central American republics; yet the industry is still in its infancy, and each year witnesses its augmentation. Undoubtedly the very best quality produced in these regions is that coming from the Vera Paz district of Guatemala; and many buyers in England have become so used to this variety that they will have no other. Costa Rica probably ranks next in the quality of her coffee, always commanding a ready and good market; but Nicaragua runs her very close in quality, and even surpasses her in quantity. San Salvador does not export on a very large scale, nor does her coffee compare in quality with that produced in her sister republics; like Spanish Honduras, it is as much as she can do to satisfy the demands in her home markets.

Botanically, the coffee-shrub is known as *Coffea Arabica*, belonging to the Rubiaceæ order. It was originally a native of Abyssinia, but has since become naturalised in many other countries. When wild or uncultivated it will often reach twenty-five and thirty feet in height; but in plantations it is seldom allowed to run beyond twelve or fifteen feet. Its main stem is almost invariably straight, the branches being thrown off in pairs at right angles, thus giving the shrub a curiously awkward appearance; and its small green leaves are to be found principally at the extremities of the branches. The flowers, which are white, generally appear in clusters all along the branches, and in time give place to small globules of a dark green, which gradually change to light green, then to yellow, and finally to a deep red. When the fruit has assumed this ruddy hue it is ripe, and the twin seeds it contains are the familiar coffee-beans of commerce.

Although coffee can be grown almost at the sea-level—indeed, I have seen a very good sample grown in British Honduras at not more than one hundred feet above it—still, it is not advisable to try to cultivate it below five hundred feet, the

best and most convenient elevations being from two to four thousand feet. A natural reluctance to form plantations far from the ports of shipment led former growers to plant at the lower levels near the coast. Planters are now generally agreed, however, that many advantages are to be gained by planting at the higher elevations; and the writer has himself seen results, in many instances, which tend to support that opinion. Not only do the trees bear more freely and produce fruit of a better quality, but in the more temperate uplands the grower is involved in less expense for weeding and clearing, and this is a serious item in those districts where the growth of unfriendly herbage is so appallingly rapid as it is in the damp heat of the lowlands. In Nicaragua especially is this the case; and coffee grown on the slopes of the extinct volcano Mom-bacho, -at, say, three hundred to eight hundred feet above sea-level, cannot for a moment compare with that grown in the districts of Managua and Matagalpa at elevations ranging from three thousand to five thousand feet. This latter district is inhabited by some twenty thousand or more semi-civilised Indians, whose sustenance consists of such game or wild fruits as they are able to procure from the immense forests surrounding them. In comparison with the generally lawless and unreliable *mestizos* or half-breeds, of whom the bulk of the population of these countries is composed, they form an excellent population. Though quiet and docile when fairly treated, they will, when smarting under an injury, real or imaginary, often rise up *en masse*, and on such occasions are a terror to the whole country. Ruled by a number of chiefs or *caudales*, scarcely more civilised than themselves, these people are held in a kind of respect by the Government of the day, which aims at keeping in harmony with them, although it is not always successful in its attempts in that direction; and in times of revolution both parties invariably send commissions to Matagalpa to enlist the support of these Indians; for, when their primitive smooth-bores are replaced by rifles more or less formidable, the party fortunate

enough to secure their aid usually triumphs. Of course, amongst these Indians there are some who are learning to till the soil. These either start little *fincas* of their own or hire themselves out to work for the few plantation owners, chiefly foreigners, who have settled down in the vicinity.

During my last sojourn in this district—towards the close of 1894, I think it was—Guillermo Jericho, a gentleman of German origin, who had succeeded in forming a very prosperous coffee plantation, was foully murdered in his bungalow on his own estate, and was discovered dead in his hammock next morning. The news spread rapidly, and as it was known that he had been into town the previous day to bring back the necessary cash wherewith to pay his labourers, it was the general conviction that robbery was the motive. I was staying at that time at the bungalow of Dr Gilman, an American dental surgeon, who divided his time between coffee-planting and dentistry. By some means or other—probably by a confession wrung from a confederate—suspicion fell on a certain Indian who had been in the deceased man's employment, and was now missing. Suddenly Gilman came bounding breathlessly into the bungalow, and rushing out to the back, commenced to saddle a mule. 'Grab a beast and come, sharp!' he shouted; and I, scenting an adventure, was soon in the saddle alongside.

In a remarkably short time we were joined by several others, mainly Americans and Germans. Off we went, numbering nine in all; and I soon learned that our errand was to effect the capture of the suspected Indian. We went first to Jericho's house, and the sight of the mutilated body, added to the fact that the victim had been highly esteemed by all his acquaintances, so fearfully incensed the party that, with all kinds of anathemas and vowing vengeance, they set off in pursuit of the murderer. They divided into two parties, each taking a different route; and our party—for I was still with them—after nearly a whole day's fruitless search, was just returning through the town, when we were hailed by the other party, also returning, but from the opposite direction. They had come up with the culprit, and had him with them, a stoutly-built fellow, bound hand and foot. Seeing that the object of our search had been attained, I left the little band and adjourned to Gilman's bungalow, for I had been in the saddle a great deal of late, and was anxious to try my friend's hammock for a change.

In the meantime the two parties, thus reunited, returned to Jericho's house, and on again viewing the now almost decomposed body, their fury passed all bounds. After a short consultation one of them stepped forward with a rope in his hand, and, making a noose which he passed over the culprit's head, tightening it round his neck, he slung the other end over a branch of a huge tree close by. Then, with a 'whoop' rather suggestive of Red Indians, his companions rushed

forward, grabbed the rope, and raised the murderer high into the air, where, after a few gurgled oaths and one or two gyrations and fruitless kicks, he expired.

Like wildfire the news travelled. The native newspapers, for days together, talked only of 'Judge Lynch in Nicaragua,' and the deed was condemned on all sides. I too, when Gilman, who had always displayed somewhat high principles, told me what they had done, could not help endeavouring to convince him that, to lynch a man, however guilty, without even an apology for a trial, was by no means commendable, and would serve as a very bad example to the natives. But he was an American, and tried to vindicate himself, pooh-poohing all my arguments.

A commission was sent from Managua by the authorities to inquire into the affair; and finally the eight executioners were apprehended and thrown into prison, also without a trial, a measure which was applauded by the natives. But the authorities were in an awkward position. Whilst it was absolutely necessary to inflict, or at all events appear to inflict, some severe punishment, in order to avert an uprising of the Matagalpa Indians, still they were compelled to act cautiously to avoid any disagreement with the American or German Governments, which, they imagined, might intervene on behalf of their respective subjects. To do the authorities justice, however, their almost proverbial wiliness did not forsake them; and although outside the so-called prison the *gringo* lynchers were very harshly spoken of and universally condemned, they were treated like lords inside, and allowed all sorts of privileges denied to other prisoners. Eventually, when the wrath of the populace had almost subsided, the prisoners were, one by one, allowed 'to walk out of the back door,' so to speak; whilst indiscreet and officious inquirers were informed that, after a secret trial inside the prison, the authorities were unable to bring the crime home to any one of the lynchers in particular, as all eight had pulled at the rope; and, therefore, they had deemed it wise to banish the lot—hence their absence. In reality their release was due to the fact that the only two unmarried men amongst them, in order to free the remaining six, assured the authorities that they were the actual lynchers, and no blame whatever attached to the six married men. Gilman, the dentist, was one of the two single men who remained in jail; but even he evidently could not have been detained there long, for I saw him in the capital shortly afterwards, a free man, pulling and stopping teeth once more; and although I never had an opportunity of asking him how he got off, being well acquainted with the country, its vices and its virtues, I found an explanation in the word 'dollars,' a word to conjure with in Nicaragua at all times, and in a law-suit an advocate infinitely superior to the cleverest of lawyers.

When the excitement caused by the incident I have just related had somewhat abated I locked up Gilman's bungalow, sent the key to him at the Cabildo, and set off to visit some of the coffee plantations in the vicinity. Some weeks later I visited several others in the San Marcos and Managua districts; and, taking advantage of these opportunities and others which were afforded me during subsequent visits to plantations in Costa Rica, Salvador, and Guatemala, I was enabled to study the methods of cultivation peculiar to these regions, and to compare them with those employed elsewhere.

In starting a coffee plantation, it is usual to commence with a nursery, formed by planting only carefully selected seed at the beginning of the rainy season. The temperature should not be below sixty-five degrees nor above eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. The rainfall should be plentiful, and the soil deep, loose, and fairly moist, so that the roots, penetrating to a considerable depth, may find below the necessary moisture to counteract the evils of the parched surface above. The chosen spot must also be well protected from trade-winds. The nursery is composed of long beds or ridges about three feet wide, divided by narrow furrows. When the earth has been well loosened and broken up, the seeds or beans are sown at a distance of four or five inches apart and about two or three inches deep; and fine loam is sprinkled over them. The beds should then be protected in some way from the fierce rays of the midday sun, when beyond an occasional watering while the rains are not very plentiful, they will need no further care, and the planter may turn his attention to the plantation itself. Naturally, the land chosen for the plantation has first to be cleared; but as the coffee-shrub is tender, certain trees have to be left standing to afford shade, the greatest care and discretion being requisite in deciding upon the right amount; for if too much shade be left, it not only deprives the coffee-tree of moisture, but of the sun's rays also, besides preventing the free circulation of air. In short, the fastidiousness of the plant in regard to extremes of moisture, light, and air makes the successful cultivation of it almost entirely a matter of studious attention to those points when selecting a location.

When the young plants are from eighteen to twenty-two inches high they can be removed from the nursery to the plantation, holes being dug from twelve to fifteen feet apart to receive them. The main root of the plant, or tap-root, strikes directly downwards; and if this be doubled, twisted, or otherwise damaged, the development of the tree will be retarded to an astounding degree, so that great care should be taken to make each hole sufficiently deep to receive the roots destined to occupy it. The transplanting over, the planter must look to the

undergrowth. Throughout its lifetime the coffee-plant must be kept free from weeds, for it is necessary that it should enjoy the whole of the moisture the soil affords. As a rule the plantation should be weeded three times annually.

Usually, between the second and third years, when the plant is from five to six feet high, it is pruned. This operation consists in removing the middle shoot or extremity of the original stem, and then covering the wound with clay; and its object, obviously, is to promote the formation of new branches, to strengthen existing ones, and to reduce the tendency of the plant to upward growth. Pruning must be judiciously done, and at a time when the plant is not bearing. In the third year the trees will begin to bear a small number of berries, and at the end of the fourth year the first real crop can be harvested. The fruit should not be picked until fully ripe, as an admixture of green berries has a detrimental effect on the remainder. The harvesting is done by native men, women, and children, each having a set daily task of picking a certain quantity of berries.

The preparation for market is not difficult. When the berries are taken from the trees they are about the size of a small gooseberry. They are first washed in running water until fermentation commences, being afterwards put into a machine known as the 'pulper,' in order to remove the outer rind. The beans then appear enveloped in a species of jacket or thin skin, commonly called 'parchment,' and in this state they undergo another washing process with the object of removing all gummy matter. They are then crushed in a mill to rid them of their parchment coverings, winnowed, and finally spread out in the open air in yards or *barbecues* to dry by the heat of the sun. Women and children separate the grains according to size and quality, removing all broken and damaged ones; and this completes the operation.

With reference to the cost of planting and cultivating coffee, Señor Romero, the Mexican Minister at Washington, U.S.A., says that each plant up to its time of bearing will cost eleven cents Mexican currency, or, say, fourpence. The manager of the Barcenas Estate in Guatemala puts the cost in that country at four cents, roughly equivalent to twopence. As coming from nearer home, however, let us take the figures of Sir H. Dering, who has written extensively on the cultivation of coffee in Mexico. He says that up to the fifth year the cost of one thousand trees, including clearing, digging holes, cost of plants, planting, weeding, and harvesting, would be thirty pounds seven shillings and eightpence; or, say roughly, sevenpence halfpenny per tree. Therefore, if we take the cost at eightpence per tree, we shall, at all events, err on the safe side. Now, if a suitable elevation has been chosen, and the site selected where the general

conditions, climatic and otherwise, are favourable, the trees will yield, in the fifth and subsequent years, an average of two pounds of coffee each; and there should be no difficulty in disposing of the product at seventy-five shillings per hundred-weight or eightpence per pound. Thus, each tree, which has cost eightpence up to time of bearing, will make a return of one shilling and fourpence annually—that is, a profit of 100 per cent. The outlay during the sixth and following years will be considerably reduced, for it will consist only of the expense of weeding, replanting where necessary, and harvesting. Thus the profits will increase proportionally, and, making the usual allowances for the planter's personal expenses and interest on the capital outlay, deducting also a liberal percentage to cover cost of preparation for the market, freights, commissions, and emergencies, there will still remain a very substantial profit.

Of course the planter need not remain idle while his coffee-trees are growing. Once they are planted, he can turn his attention to side-crops, such as

maize, ginger, sarsaparilla, or any other product to which his soil is adapted. These will bring in small profits while he is waiting, and help to reduce the cost of producing the main crops.

The price obtainable in the market depends to a vast extent on the preparation of the beans before shipment. Several planters who have taken greater care than usual of their trees, studied the cultivation more closely, and gone to the expense of first-class machinery, are able to command much better prices; indeed, I have known some to obtain up to one hundred and twenty shillings per hundredweight for their produce. Others send their coffee in the parchment skin to London, to be prepared there by the most modern appliances. This latter step is very advisable. By adopting this method the grower lessens slightly the expense of preparation, whilst the parchment covering, if left intact, preserves both the aroma and colour of the bean during transit. In this way a much better price is ensured when the coffee comes upon the market.

MRS MILLS' ECONOMY.



FARMER MILLS, of Burt's Corner, put down the pen he had been writing with; and, with a grunt of dissatisfaction, pushed a sheet of paper across to his wife, who sat opposite, sewing.

'There, lass, that will be just four hundred pounds left owing when old Bliss has been paid his interest to-morrow; and, what with one thing and another, it's powerful hard to pay much off beside. Now, are you sure, Pris, there's nothing else you can economise in?'

Priscilla Mills pursed her lips and went on working energetically, yet glancing significantly in the direction of the old-fashioned chimney-corner, where sat an old man, with his eyes half-closed.

He had evidently followed the conversation, however; and, not waiting for the woman to reply, chimed in, with a quiet laugh:

'Economise, Abraham? What for? What's the use of stinting and cutting everything so fine—eh? I reckon you're doing handsome, to pay interest, and some of the capital off every year into the bargain, as you know you do. Why, when you married my daughter Jane for your first wife there was over a thousand pounds mortgage on this farm; and since then, between us all, it's down to four hundred; and I reckon that's good work, without economising much further. Economy can go too far sometimes,' concluded the old man, as he knocked the ashes out of his clay pipe on the hob.

For the word economise was not to his liking; he had experienced so much of it one way or

another from the present Mrs Mills that he was beginning to fear his last solace, his pipe, would be stopped.

Mrs Mills had waited ominously until he had finished, and then let loose the vials of her wrath on his head.

With a shrill voice she told him to recollect that he was dependent now on their bounty, and as such had no right to interfere in her affairs, as mistress of the house.

'Easy, lass, easy,' interjected Abraham whenever he got a chance, which was seldom, and which was all he dared say in the old man's defence, who had sat dazed through the outburst, and, without waiting for it to subside, betook himself off to bed, while the farmer slipped out to the stable to look round for the night, and to enjoy a quiet half-hour.

When Mrs Mills was in a worse temper than usual she always played a vigorous tattoo on the table—which was one reason why the old man and the farmer thought it wisest to leave her, the latter thinking that by the time he returned the paroxysm would be over, and matters would go on quieter for a time; but he was mistaken, for on returning the signs were as vigorous as ever.

'Abraham Mills, am I to be dictated to in my own house?' she demanded with emphasis the moment he had closed the door.

'Certainly not, my lass; but the old man meant no harm; he likes to have a say, seeing that he has lived on the farm all his life.'

'Say or no say, Mills, I've made up my mind, and I give you notice that John Walters shan't

stay under this roof many days longer;' and her face assumed a determined expression.

'Come, come, lass; don't be too hard on him,' replied the farmer, somewhat startled at the turn matters were taking.

'I've settled everything,' she replied, 'and so I won't be thwarted; but sit down, and hear what I've got to say here this very night.'

With subdued mien the farmer obeyed and prepared to listen, knowing full well that if she said the matter—whatever it might be—was settled, it was of little use his objecting.

She was rather calmer now; but with a look of acidity delivered her decision:

'As I said, I have determined that the old man must go, and that speedily.'

Mills looked at her astonished. 'Go—go where?'

Without replying to his query, she continued:

'He is now seventy-five, eats heartily, and smokes a lot—all expense; and, as he gets older, perhaps a doctor will be needed; or perhaps he might live ten or fifteen—ay, twenty—years longer. The Walters are a long-lived family. Why, man,' she concluded her tirade, 'he will be no end of trouble, and cost us two or three hundred pounds, maybe.'

'Ay, ay! Granted. But what the deuce are you driving at? Let us be knowing, woman.'

'This: he must go to the workhouse, and soon,' she replied deliberately; 'before he becomes a burden.'

'What!' he ejaculated, regarding her with astonishment. 'The workhouse? Why, the neighbours would cry shame on us, lass.'

'I care nothing for neighbours and their talk,' she snapped. 'Let them mind their own business. I tell you once for all, my mind is made up, and has been for some time; therefore, that settles the matter.'

The farmer blew a cloud of smoke, gave a whistle, but said nothing, knowing it would be useless, and that what had been said by his better-half was law, and nothing would turn her decision. Yet he felt a qualm of shame when he remembered what the old man had been to him in the past.

Yet, further, to his great disgust, his wife laid on him a few days later the undesirable office of telling the old man as to his future destination; and it was not without feeling very shamefaced that he broke the news, which was received in silence. For a few minutes the white-headed old man seemed unable to grasp the purport of the message. As he gazed feebly round the kitchen, with its heavy rafters black with age, and hung with hams and bacon in plenty, the tears trickled down his withered cheeks as he thought of the past, and the happy hours he had experienced under that roof, which was not to shelter him any longer.

'Economise, economise,' he murmured; 'is this,

then, what it means? Ah, me! Man and boy have I worked on this farm for sixty-five long yet happy years; and now I am turned out of where I ought to end my days. Economy's all very well; but doing right's better. Still, God's will be done,' he said, with a pathetic sigh.

Abraham Mills twiddled his thumbs and, shuffling uneasily in his chair, looked across at his wife appealingly.

But she was relentless, and as firm as adamant.

'Now, it's no use taking on about it,' she replied in a hard, matter-of-fact tone. 'You'll be comfortable enough in the "House," I'll be bound; and I have settled with Sam Wilmer to come for you in his cart at three o'clock, to drive you to Brankton; so the less fuss the better, and the sooner you'll get used to it.'

Sam Wilmer was a small, hard-working farmer and general carrier for the district, and his wife was annoyed when he told her his destination while he was harnessing the old mare. Sam's wife, Betsy, before she married him, was servant to the old man; and, in her kindness of heart, could not conceive a reason for the step, knowing how he had worked and slaved for them all. So the news upset her; but before Sam started she gave him instructions:

'Now, Sam, listen. After you leave the farmhouse with the old man, mind you drive with him straight up here. It'll only be a mile out of your way, and I'll get a cup of tea ready, and let him see that there's somebody who thinks a little about him, different to them two graspers up yonder—drat 'em!' And, jerking her head contemptuously, she departed indoors, flushed with wrath; while Sam, with a laugh, jumped in, bade Kitty get on, and started to fetch his passenger.

The old man sat for the last time in his favourite nook by the fireside. In front of him his bundle of clean clothes lay on the table, and knotted loosely in a handkerchief was a geranium which he had reared from one of his old wife's cherished plants. While he gazed around, absorbed in sorrow, Sam's old market-cart rattled up to the door. Mrs Mills stood by the window watching.

'Here's Sam. Now, are you ready?' she said, without the slightest tone of feeling.

'Ay, ay; quite ready;' and, taking a last look, he picked up his bundles and stick, and walked feebly towards the open door, past Mrs Mills, who held out her hand stiffly.

'Good-bye,' she said curtly. 'You needn't take on so; me or Abraham will come over sometimes and see how you are getting on.'

'Good-bye, missis,' he replied brokenly; but the moisture-laden eyes prevented his seeing the extended hand, and he passed out, while the farmer, ashamed at his own cowardice and the whole business, was peeping through an upper window until they were gone.

Sam spoke not a word, though full of angry thoughts, as they bowled along, now and again glancing at his charge, who sat looking stonily ahead; the old man never noticing that they had passed the turning to the main road to Brankton until they came to a cottage.

'Whoa, lass!' and the exclamation, with a sudden stop, brought the old man to himself, to find his old servant Betsy and her little daughter standing in the house-porch with a smile of welcome.

'Now, dad, let's have you out for a bit; leave off thinking about that cursed pair of sharks, and come and have a cup of tea with us. There's Betsy and the youngster waiting; look at them. Besides, it looks uncommonly like to me as if there was a storm blowing up from yonder.'

Almost as he spoke there fell a few heavy spots of rain; and, seeing the old man and his bundles safely inside, he quickly put up his mare and joined the others, just as the storm beat furiously on the window panes. The old man sat comfortably crooning an old song to the little girl, who was now settled on his knee, while Sam and his wife sat opposite communing together. There were nods and whisperings, and the end of it all was that their guest stayed that night and the night following, until it was settled between the pair that he should stay there with them so long as he lived.

Which caused Mrs Mills to remark, when it came to her ears, that if some people chose to be fools it was none of her business.

Two years later John Walters was laid to rest with his forefathers in the little hillside churchyard. Farmer Mills and his wife had been invited to the funeral, with several neighbours who had known the old yeoman, and, to their wonderment, Lawyer Framley from Brankton had attended at the graveside; and, after the last rites had been paid, he invited them all, with Mr Sam's permission, to return with him to the house, where he would have a little matter of business to settle and make known to them. All thought it was singular; but there was not a man or woman there who did not return, and all were soon seated in Betsy's best room.

After refreshments had been passed round in country fashion, Lawyer Framley drew a packet of papers from his pocket, and looked keenly around at the expectant faces.

'I must explain to you first,' he began, 'that my late client, Mr John Walters, desired me to attend at his funeral, and invite all who cared to come, as being more satisfactory, to hear his last will and testament read.'

'His will!' ejaculated Mrs Mills with a snap, while her husband opened his eyes, widely; 'his will! Why, he had nothing to leave, man. What nonsense is this?'

The lawyer bowed with a look which told an observant onlooker that he held a winning hand.

'Pardon me, madam; but as to that I will now proceed to enlighten you.'

There was dead silence as he methodically untied and then proceeded to read the document which had been made and signed twelve months before, and in which he left to his dear friends and benefactors, Samuel and Betsy Wilmer, all his real and personal estate whatsoever and where-soever—duly signed and attested.

Mrs Mills, unconvinced, smiled grimly, remarking with bitter emphasis, 'Pooh! What rubbish, to be sure! He had nothing much but what he stood up in; and to go and make a will! Why, the man was mad;' and she laughed with derision.

'My late client was far from being mad, madam,' returned the lawyer stiffly; 'and it is now my duty to give a little explanation according to his last wishes, and then I have finished.'

'As some of you may remember, John Walters had a son James, who emigrated to Australia when a young man. He corresponded with his father for a time; but his letters got fewer and fewer, until they ceased altogether. Nothing had been heard of him for over twenty years, and it was supposed that he was dead. But he was not dead; he had married out there, and had lost his wife and two children; so, feeling lonely, he had made up his mind to come back to the old country; but unfortunately he also died before this decision could be carried out.'

'He had previously made inquiries, and knew at that time that his father was living at the old farm, so he had willed all his belongings to him, as sole relative.'

'When my late client was notified of his fortune it was his wish that the affair should be kept secret; and it has been so until this present time, as he desired you all to know that what had been done for him by friends during his later days was simply from pure kindness of heart, and not from expectations or greed.'

The lawyer inclined his head to Betsy, who was weeping silently through the ordeal, Sam squeezing her hand sympathetically the while. Mrs Mills stared at the lawyer, her features twitching with excitement and passion; and her husband gripped the arms of the chair and stared blankly around.

With an effort the woman jerked out spasmodically, 'And—what amount has he left, pray, after all?'

Not a sound could be heard but the rustling of the papers as the lawyer tied them together, and, looking straight at her, he replied quietly and effectively, sending a thrill of excitement through the room, 'Ten thousand pounds!'

'What!' she shrieked, the wine-glass she had held dropping from her nerveless fingers to the oaken floor with a crash: 'ten thousand pounds—lost—lost—for'—

A faint whisper in answer parted the farmer's lips—'For economy.'

HOW TO LIVE UNDER WATER.



O century of the world's hitherto chronicled history can show such a record for invention and discovery as the nineteenth; and its closing years, far from seeing any diminution in the number of secrets wrested from Science and from Nature, bring us every day further evidences of man's ingenuity and research. His fertile brain has controlled light and heat and motion, and he defies time and space. Now he is engaged in discovering, among other things, how human beings may live in an element that is, apparently, not intended for them. As the result of studies in this direction, the Academy of Paris has been examining into the truth of a very remarkable proposition, its attention having been drawn to the subject by the well-known physiologist Dr Laborde. When the question is known to be that of how man can exist under water, the importance of the matter with regard to the problems of submarine navigation will instantly be realised. That this has been possible to a certain degree is, of course, well known; but the system hitherto in use, of employing reservoirs of compressed air, from which a respirable gas was gradually released, has not given entire satisfaction, as it leaves behind in the confined space the residuum of all sorts of the human breath. Monsieur Georges Jaubert, formerly attached to the Polytechnic School of Paris, set himself, according to the account given by Dr Laborde, to solve the following problem: how to provide a person placed in a confined space with the practical means of preparing a respirable artificial air necessary for life. Taking for basis the standard idea that the composition of the air we breathe is 79 per cent. of nitrogen and 21 per cent. of oxygen, Monsieur Jaubert first examined air vitiated by respiration or combustion, and of which the oxygen had been completely exhausted, to see if the 79 per cent. of nitrogen remained intact, and if, by a special process of purifying to eliminate the carbonic acid and watery vapour, the normal air could not be reconstituted by an admixture of pure oxygen with the original nitrogen.

Numerous chemical experiments proved this hypothesis to be correct on all points. But the most important question of all remained yet to be solved: How was the oxygen to be generated? After long and patient researches, Monsieur Georges Jaubert has, he declares, discovered a chemical substance (the name of which he, not unnaturally, keeps for the present to himself) that will, by a single operation of extreme simplicity and within the reach of every one, perform the desired miracle. In the first place, it will thoroughly purify the vitiated air in a confined space of its carbonic acid, its watery vapour,

and all the other unrespirable gases, the result of human exhalation. In the second place, it will restore to him in exchange just the quantity of oxygen he requires. In a word, this marvellous substance, by its simple contact with air vitiated by respiration, will regenerate the latter entirely, and restore to it all its former good qualities. Various experiments are being made at the present time by the French Admiralty, and their experiences leave no doubt, it seems, of the enormous value of the discovery. The inventor claims that with from six to eight pounds of this new product it is possible to give all the air necessary to ensure life to an adult man for twenty-four hours, even in such a confined space as that of a diving-bell or the present form of submarine boat; and the trials made with it, both with beast and man, prove this to be no mere empty boast. Dr Laborde and Monsieur Jaubert intend to pursue their examination of the qualities of this chemical substance with a view to the application of oxygen thus generated to medical and therapeutic treatment.

There is reason to hope that this new scientific discovery will be of extraordinary benefit to mankind. If it is practically established, it is quite impossible to realise the changes which its use may bring about. The oxygen obtained by the new process is chemically unadulterated, and can, as far as purity is concerned, only be compared to electrolytic oxygen.

PREDESTINATED.

Not always 'mid the toiling and the striving
Does solitary effort claim remark;
Not often in the fevered rush of living
Do single sparklets flash from out the dark.

Yet, now and then, some sweet, refined existence
Shines, silhouetted, 'gainst a dull, cold sky,
And shows us, with a pow'r beyond resistance,
That it is purposeful, and cannot die.

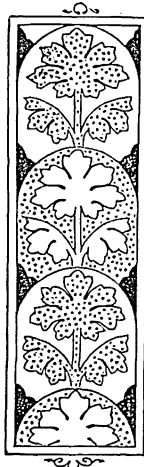
For even when the golden bowl is broken,
And when the silver cord is loosed for aye,
We hold the words that helpful lips have spoken
To guide us gently on our rugged way.

God takes the Harvest, man is left the Gleaning,
And, to mistrusting ones, the Spirit saith,
'There is no Life without its perfect meaning,
There is no chance in that which men call Death.'

Sweet lives pass on: the world may never mind them,
And souls, though bright, may shed no dazzling ray;
But God will know exactly where to find them
When He makes up His jewels in His day.

Bring, then, O hearts! the first-fruits of your treasure;
Yield up your living, trust your sacred dead.
Weigh not the cost, for He who holds the measure
Will smooth and straighten ev'ry tangled thread.

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

NATTERJACKS.

IN the course of my spring and summer rambles on the East Anglian marshes, I often visit a lonesome tract of salt-marsh lying not far from the coast. The salt tide of a river-estuary washes the southern border of the marsh, and deposits there a dark stain of coal-dust, intermingled with broken cork net-floats, clusters of whelks' eggs, shellfish, and the 'wheelbarrows' of the skate. Sea-gulls and hooded crows are often seen on its oozy shores in winter, when they come there to feed on the stranded sea-wrack; and then, too, one may hear the harsh screeching of dunlins and the plaintive pipings of the beachmen's 'sand-larks,' the ringed plovers. Lapwings often wheel above the marsh, and I have found their nests not far from the rush-fringed salt pools; and snipe may be flushed from amid the rank aquatic grasses. In summer some of the fairest of our fen flowers bloom there, such as the beautiful marsh orchids and pale-pink bog-beans; while in autumn the tall sea asters wave their daisy-like blossoms amid the rushes and sedges.

After the end of March, when there is warmth in the sunshine, and the golden blooms of the marsh-marigolds deck the dikesides, I often hear, while rambling along the borders of the marsh, a curious trilling that makes the air seem tremulous. It comes from the dikes which intersect the marsh, and is not the trilling of a flock of warblers, hidden by the reeds, but the love-song of the natterjacks. It is difficult to describe the sound, and I can only say that it somewhat resembles the distance-deadened song of a night-jar, or what one might imagine to be the effect of the grass-hopper-warbler's 'grinding' robbed of its metallic shrillness. When first I heard it I was much puzzled as to its origin; but a marshman whom I interrogated on the subject told me that it was made by 'them there runnin' toads, an' he an' his mates orfen called 'em marsh-birds.' Since then I have often come across the natterjack in the course of my marshland wanderings; and a better acquaintance with it has impressed upon me

the fact that it is one of the most interesting of our few British reptiles.

The natterjack toad was first discovered in England about the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was found in Lincolnshire by Sir Joseph Banks, who reported his discovery to Thomas Pennant, the naturalist friend of Linnæus and correspondent of Gilbert White of Selborne. Pennant devoted much time to the observing of frogs and toads; and in White's letters to him we find references which prove that they were in the habit of comparing notes concerning these familiar reptiles. Not much, however, was learnt about the natterjack, which was considered a very rare species in this country; for at the end of the last century Sir Joseph Banks wrote: 'The *rubeta*, or natterjack, frequents dry and sandy places. It is found on Putney Common, and also near Reversby Abbey, Lincolnshire. It never leaps, neither does it crawl with the slow pace of the toad; but its motion is liker to running. Several are found commonly together, and, like others of the genus, they appear in the evenings.' This is all that was known of the natterjacks in Sir Joseph Banks's day, except that among the Lincolnshire fenmen they were called 'Boston waites' and 'Dutch nightingales.'

Unlike the common toad, the natterjack is a decidedly local species; it is fairly abundant in some districts, and entirely absent from others. It is supposed to be indigenous in the south-west of Ireland, where, like common toads and frogs, it apparently escaped the exorcism of St Patrick; and in some of the eastern counties of England it is almost as numerous as the common species; but, although most plentiful in marshy districts, it only resorts to the water during the breeding season, and is quite capable of existing for months together in dry places. There is little doubt, however, that it has a partiality for marshes; and that it prefers those not far from the sea is indicated by its presence in the fenny localities of Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Dorset, Hampshire, and Cambridgeshire.

There is no difficulty in distinguishing between the natterjack and common toad, for the former is smaller than the latter, and, as its name of 'walking' or 'running' toad implies, has a different mode of progression. The common toad is, as Shakespeare says, a 'heavy-gaited' creature; but the natterjack is more agile in its movements, and when disturbed will 'walk' or 'run' fairly fast. To see a toad elevate its body and run strikes one as a somewhat curious sight at first; but the natterjack can not only run, but can climb over obstacles that might well be imagined impassable to it. I have seen a natterjack comfortably installed upon the top of a log that lay beside a lowland dike, and from the complacent manner in which it sat and gazed about it one might have supposed it was proud of its climbing powers. When, at the commencement of the breeding season, it starts off from its winter quarters for the marsh dikes, it allows nothing—not even an ivy-clad garden-wall—to hinder its advance. Like many other creatures, it has a way of shamming death when in danger, and it does this so cleverly that even the marshmen, who, while they are dike-drawing, come across plenty of natterjacks, have been deceived. 'They're curious warmins,' said one of these men of the marshes, 'for you may see 'em lyin' spread out near th' deeks, lookin' jist as if some one had stamped on 'em an' squashed 'em; an' if you pick 'em up they 'ont move unless you give 'em a good tidy nip.' The Norfolk fenmen, according to Dr Emerson, have a 'rockstaff,' or proverb, 'that a man can quiet the most restive horse with the bone of a running toad.'

The natterjack has shorter hind-legs than the

common toad, more conspicuous eyes, and less-webbed feet. Its body is of a yellowish-brown colour, with dark-greenish cloudings; and along the middle of its back runs a thin bright-yellow line. The male possesses a vocal sac, which is absent in the common species, and which only reaches its fullest development in the green toad of the Continent. This sac renders its trilling much louder than it would otherwise be. The species deposits its spawn in the usual way of batrachians, and its young assume the tadpole form, though the tadpoles are smaller and darker than those of the common toad. It has been estimated that the female lays as many as nineteen thousand eggs; but this is not too great a number when it is considered how many tadpoles are destroyed by fishes, newts, and the larvæ of dragon-flies, and that water-fowl and fish at times gorge themselves with the spawn. Bell, in his *British Reptiles*, even goes so far as to say that the tadpoles eat each other; but although I have reared a good many of them, I have never seen anything that suggested such a thing. Worms and insects are the favourite food of the species, which has a long tongue, to assist it in catching the latter. A naturalist who kept some natterjacks in his garden observed that they were fond of lying exposed to the full glare of the summer sun, and that while enjoying their sun-baths they were ever on the alert for such insects as came within their reach.

The scientific name of the species is *Bufo calamita*; and its English name, if not derived from the provincial word *natter*, to be querulous, find fault, nag (used by George Eliot in *Adam Bede*), in allusion to its voice, is presumably from the Anglo-Saxon *nædre*, an adder.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER VII.—THE SETTLING OF AN OLD SCORE.

FOR a time my lord was silent, and busied himself in so arranging his cloak and wraps as to ensure the utmost warmth and comfort—a matter of no small consequence on a cold winter day. We had reached the open country before he turned to me, his eyes dancing with merriment.

'Why so glum, man of little faith?' he asked.

'Frankly, my lord, I like the affair less than ever,' said I.

'And cannot credit me with some degree of method in my madness? Fie, George! Come, am I in the habit of doing anything without a purpose?'

I had to confess that he was not.

'But, in this case, you cannot conceive what it is? Well, for your sins, you are not to learn it yet awhile!' He leaned back in his corner, laughing quietly to himself. 'A single hint!'

he said, continuing. 'We have been playing a comedy, some old friends and I—even you have had, unconsciously to yourself, a part in it—and I am vastly in error if the curtain is not about to rise on the last act. Then you will see—what it may surprise you to see, my lad.'

'But . . . I don't understand!'

'I have no intention that you should,' said he cheerfully. 'To divulge the secret beforehand would only spoil your enjoyment of the play. . . . *À propos*, have you ever helped to trap a fox? If you have, you will know that 'tis no easy task, and that the bait must be delicate and skilfully laid. That, in a word, is why we are here at this moment.'

'And we are the bait?' I cried, as his meaning began to dawn upon me, albeit but dimly.

'I am, to be precise. And, if all goes as I hope, I think I can promise you some entertainment within the next hour or two. That being

so,' he went on, 'I have a favour to ask. I have had little sleep for two nights past, and would be the better of a nap. You, on your part, are burning to give me your adventures and—confessions, shall I say? Well, I want you to keep the story until we can have it comfortably over a bottle of wine at Devizes, where we lie to-night. Of course, if you must speak, I am at your mercy. But otherwise, I will listen with the devoutest attention when we get to the "Bear"—which is more than I may do at present. Is it a bargain?'

I replied that 'twas for him to decide; and indeed, thanks to his hints, I had not now the same consuming desire to unbosom myself. Somehow it seemed less essential.

'Very good,' said he, and at once composed himself in his place. In two minutes he was snoring gently.

For me, what could I do but look out (with unobserving eyes, I fear) at the white landscape that flitted past the steam-clouded window, and permit my imagination free rein? Here I need not set down the thoughts and anticipations that ran through my brain. The reality was not amongst them.

So the coach jolted onward, with many an oath and crack of the whip from the postillions. Considering the late snowfall, our progress was not unsatisfactory; and as we dashed through one hamlet after another, and passed field and hedge and wood, I idly recognised the successive landmarks that I had noted on my ride to Bath the day before. 'Twas scarcely travellers' weather; and, save for a few wagons, a score or two of country folks afoot, and a stray chaise—and these chiefly in the first half-dozen miles—we had an open road. It became more and more deserted as the second hour merged into the third and the afternoon shortened. Latterly, in a long stretch, we met nothing but the London coach. It flashed by to the cheerful music of the horn, and for an instant my lord's slumber was broken.

The next half-hour was without incident, yet I had an increasing feeling of restlessness as the minutes sped. Then, happening to glance out, I observed something (but forget what) that gave me my bearings. I realised that we were approaching the byroad which led to the Dower-house of Langbridge, and so could not be far from the spot where I had encountered the highwaymen. The fact, for some strange reason, added to my foreboding. Sir Charles and Kitty had been much in my mind, and now Craddock (if that were the pad's name) recurred to it; and with the conjunction came a premonition that here, if anywhere, would my lord's comedy be played out. As you are to learn, I was right. Only, 'twas to be a tragedy rather than a comedy.

Indeed, the idea had hardly been formed ere 'twas justified. There was a cry without, fol-

lowed by a frantic rapping on the roof of the coach; my lord woke up with a start; and, pulling the window open, I thrust forth my head. As I did so, I heard Joseph's voice from the rumble:

'Look, sir! . . . There, in front!'

The road took a sharp turn, which we were just rounding; the light was still good, although the dusk was beginning to creep in; and, looking, I saw that which had startled the servant—and now startled me. For there, fifty or sixty yards on, a couple of masked men sat their horses right in our path; and the taller (as I perceived at once) had a black beard, and bestrode a powerful bay with a patch of white on its forehead! In my amazement, I had almost called out: there was no mistaking either man or horse. And, inconceivable as it may seem in those later days, they were plainly determined to stop us—in daylight, and on one of the main highways of England!

'Faster! faster!' I shouted to the postillions. 'Don't pull up—ride them down if they will not give way!'

The men lashed their horses, and I drew in again. Then, having possessed myself of the pistols lying ready on the opposite seat, I turned to my lord. Never had I beheld him more cool.

'Well?' he asked.

'Pads—and the pair who stopped me before!'

Rising, he cast off his wraps. 'Are you quite sure it isn't our fox?' said he, with his quiet smile. 'In any event, George—no violence unless I say the word.'

Suddenly, before I could reply, came a rough jolt; he was thrown against me, and both of us against the door; then another, followed by the shivering of glass; and, as the coach tilted up, 'twas borne upon me that the arguments of a brace of pistols had proved more potent than my command, and the rascally postillions had driven us into the ditch. The sequel was not long delayed. Just as we had picked ourselves up, the far door was pulled open, and the black-bearded pad showed himself, pistol in hand. He regarded us for a minute in silence, and meanwhile a shot cracked outside.

'Twas to me that he addressed himself at last.

'Once more, Mr Holroyd!' said he. 'I am very fortunate! Now I must trouble you to get down—you and his lordship.'

I started on hearing his voice; it sounded not altogether the same as that of my old antagonist, and liker to another that was more familiar to me. Even yet, however, I guessed not the truth.

My lord answered him. 'With pleasure, sir,' he said briskly, and climbed out with the agility of a younger man.

I made haste to follow, and in a glance saw our position. The coach was firmly fixed in the left-hand ditch, while the horses stood quiet,

panting and trembling. The postillions had fled; twenty yards back, they and Joseph were disappearing at their best speed round the turn, leisurely herded by the other highwayman. He it was, no doubt, who had fired to hurry them on.

The same glance also told me exactly where we were. For, some thirty or forty yards Londonwards, I recognised the point at which the road to the Dower-house left the highway. On the main road, which ran on in a straight line for perhaps half a mile farther, not a movement was to be observed. At the spot of our adventure 'twas bounded on one side by a hedge, and on the other by a high park-wall. It struck me that the wall was probably that of Langbridge.

All this I had noticed instinctively; and meanwhile my lord had drawn out his snuff-box, and was calmly awaiting the highwayman's next step. He, on his part, sat his horse motionless until the fleeing trio of servants were out of sight. Then he raised his hand to his face with a quick gesture.

'Enough of this masquerade!' he cried. 'It has served its purpose in frightening these fools, and now it may go!'

The voice was doubtful no longer; and an exclamation of utter astonishment was forced from me as mask and beard dropped to the ground together and the man stood revealed.

'*Sir Charles Hollingworth!*'

'Twas indeed my cousin—and he and the pad were one and the same.

'Or Squire Craddock—at your service, Cousin George,' said he. 'You had no suspicion? Well, the necessity of war must excuse the former affair. This concerns you less.' He turned at that to my lord, who had shown not the slightest sign of surprise, and just then was taking a pinch of snuff. 'So we have met again—at last,' he remarked to him.

Their eyes encountered; and I knew that two men who hated each other with the deadliest hatred, and could never be aught but enemies, were face to face.

'Oh, I felt sure that my hint would have its proper effect,' said my lord, replacing his snuff-box in his pocket.

'Then you intended this meeting?' Sir Charles's tone had just a shade of perplexity in it.

'Knowing you, I hoped for it.'

'And, having met'—He broke off as his comrade cantered back and pulled up beside him. 'Well, Tom?'

'All clear,' replied the other. 'The cowards will run for a mile before they stop.'

He looked from one to another, hesitated for a moment, and then unmasked likewise. This time I was not unprepared—and had my arm been stronger I should have been yet more

pleased to discover another old acquaintance. I had not forgotten the previous evening.

'You too, Mr Kennett?' cried my lord. 'Still playing for the high stakes, I perceive? Well, young men *will*.'

He bowed, but said nothing; and after a whispered conversation Sir Charles gave him his bridle and dismounted. I was still gripping my pistols, and, nodding to me, Kennett proceeded to recharge his. My cousin intercepted the sign, and put his own interpretation upon it.

'Mind, Kennett,' he said meaningly, 'this is a matter betwixt Lord Kynaston and me—and betwixt us alone—and Mr Holroyd has no part in it.'

'Unluckily for me—or for Mr Holroyd,' returned Kennett.

'And as it must be settled speedily, while the light lasts . . . if his lordship, as I am convinced,' he added, again confronting him, 'has no objection . . . why, let us get to business!'

'By all means,' said my lord. 'Twas for that purpose I sought this meeting, having a certain proposal to make you.'

'There can be but one,' said Sir Charles, 'and it need not delay us for long.'

'A moment, if you will pardon me. First, I have to remind you of several facts. Any day these three weeks past I could have laid you by the heels, and you have not taken a single step unknown to me—neither yourself nor one of your accomplices. Your plot, if I may call it so—one expected more from such an old conspirator as Dare-devil Charlie—your plot is dead. 'Twas strangled yesterday—and you know who strangled it.'

'I am not denying that you were cursedly well informed!' burst out Sir Charles.

'So, there being an end of that'—

'Not quite!' cried the other. 'I trust to end it myself—when your lordship is ready.'

'Oh, I have not done. . . . His Majesty's business being settled, then, I remembered an ancient score of my own. I am here to pay it—and you will guess that I have not come unprepared. To be frank, I expect a reinforcement of half-a-dozen men or so in a few minutes, and I have others on every road within a dozen miles. Thus your friends—all your friends, Hollingworth,' he repeated with a grave significance in his tone—'are at my mercy—unless you choose to accept my offer.'

So the secret was out! I heard a muttered oath from Kennett as he glanced apprehensively round—first along the road, and then at Sir Charles.

'And the offer?' inquired the latter curtly.

'Is simply that you deliver yourself prisoner to me,' answered my lord quietly. 'In that case your friends may go back to exile without hindrance from the government.'

'And in the other case?'

'Of your refusal?' He shrugged his shoulders. 'Then I am afraid there will be lamentation in many noble families—perhaps even in the most exalted.'

The allusion was sufficiently plain, and to me the dilemma that faced Sir Charles seemed a terrible one. But I did less than justice to his readiness of resource.

'A pretty scheme, egad!' he cried. 'Yet, after all, does it not strike you that there is another course? God knows we have little cause to love each other, Kynaston, but at the least let us play the game out like gentlemen! We are man to man: why should we not finish the bout that was interrupted some twenty years ago?'

My lord's face darkened at the recollection. 'The stakes were more level then,' he said. 'Now you have nothing to lose—even your life is forfeit—and everything to gain.'

'Is not that the very consideration that should appeal to you?' asked Sir Charles, with a touch of scorn. Then he turned towards the other, smiling wickedly. 'Or is it that, as ever, my Lord Kynaston trusts to his head rather than his hands for the undoing of his enemies?'

The red flamed into my lord's cheek, and his answer was swift—and uncompromising.

'That is a lie, and you know it, Hollingworth!'

In an instant they had doffed cloaks and gloves and their swords were out. They would have met there and then if I had not intervened.

'Think, my lord'—

He stopped me at once. 'After Sir Charles has had his proof,' he said coldly.

'And you may see fairplay, George,' added Sir Charles, still smiling. 'But had we not better go back a little? We may frighten the coach-horses here. And if you will keep watch at the turn for Lord Kynaston's friends, Kennett'—

'I was just thinking of that,' he said, and rode off at once with the two steeds.

All remonstrance would now have been in vain. Not only did each man stand for a cause: he had an implacable enmity of twenty years to nerve him. The preliminaries were speedily arranged, and surely was never duel so important to be fought under conditions less favourable! The light was fast fading; and at the spot chosen, a dozen yards or thereabout behind the coach, the trodden snow offered but an insecure footing.

I gave the word, and the blades crossed and embraced. Both men had skill beyond the ordinary. Sir Charles I had proved myself, and my lord's reputation was high in the London schools; and now the first minute's play told me that they were well matched. I have not the heart

to write in detail of the keen and relentless struggle that ensued. 'Twas, as I was well aware, a fight to the death; I was bound to both by many ties, and could not witness it unmoved; and with the lapse of time that which remains most clearly in my memory is the impression of the bitter ending.

The issue was long in doubt. For nearly ten minutes the only sounds to be heard were the hard breathing of the combatants and the ring of the steel, and still the advantage was to neither. More than once my heart jumped into my mouth—as when Sir Charles's sword slipped under his opponent's guard and ripped his coat, and again when my cousin saved himself by a marvellous *riposte*. And then, while the result hung in the balance, this shout came suddenly from Kennett:

'Horsemen in sight, and riding fast—they will be on us in five minutes!'

The antagonists did not seem to hear him, and certainly paid no heed. The lust of contest was in their blood, and all else was forgotten. But the end was near. A minute later the good fight was over. Sir Charles's foot slipped as he made a quick *botte*, and before he could recover himself my lord had seized his chance. My cousin fell forward, run through the body.

I was beside him in a second; and Kennett, seeing what had happened, threw himself from his horse and joined me. Together we did our best, which was but little. But Sir Charles, looking up at us with his whimsical smile, shook his head.

'Tis no good—I'm done for at last,' said he faintly. Then: 'Is Kynaston there?'

My lord bent over him.

'Will you shake hands, Kynaston?' he asked. 'You have won the game—and I bear you no grudge. At the least, I have cheated the London mob of a beheading!'

So they clasped hands, those two who had been lifelong rivals and enemies, and had at length settled their dispute. As the winner turned away I could have sworn that the muscles about his mouth were twitching.

Then Sir Charles spoke again: 'Now, Kennett—off with you!' he said.

'I stand or fall with you,' returned the other doggedly.

'You have yourself to think of—and the Prince. . . . He comes first, lad! . . . And Holroyd will see to me.'

Kennett resisted no further. Jumping upon his horse, and taking the bridle of Sir Charles's, he rode off; and as he turned into the byroad and so from my view, I heard the clatter of the approaching reinforcement—which was too late. And, looking, I saw that Sir Charles had fainted away.

FRUIT-FARMING IN SCOTLAND.

By A PRACTICAL MAN.

IN TWO PARTS—PART I.



IN these days of agricultural depression, when the farmer finds it increasingly difficult year by year to make both ends meet, while the landowner is confronted by an annual shrinkage in his rental, it is at first sight a somewhat surprising fact that more attention is not given to the development of the cultivation of fruit. The enormous quantity of fruit, and more particularly of strawberries and raspberries, which is consumed both in its natural state and in the shape of jam, must have led many, both farmers and landowners, to wonder whether they could not participate in the profits of the trade. In the present article it is proposed, without going too deeply into the statistics of the business, to point out some of the difficulties and trials which beset the path of the fruit-farmer in Scotland. There are probably not many outside the trade who are aware what a large industry already exists in the cultivation of what is known as 'small fruit'—that is, of strawberries and raspberries—and, to a much more limited extent, of currants and gooseberries.

In the district to which this article primarily applies, it is the ambition of every cottager to rent or feu a piece of ground whereon to grow fruit; and, though it may appear paradoxical to say so, it is on fruit grown in comparatively small quantities on an acre or two of land that the surest and, proportionately, the largest profits are made. The risks run by a small grower are less, the expense of cultivation is comparatively smaller, and he has greater certainty of finding a market for his fruit than the large farmer; while, naturally, he is not so harassed by the difficulty of obtaining labour.

The great centres of fruit cultivation in Scotland are the Clyde valley, Perthshire, and, to an increasing extent, the neighbourhood of Aberdeen. The farm with the working of which this article is primarily concerned is situated in Perthshire, and the observations as to the cultivation, picking, and despatch of the fruit apply more especially to that district, though—*mutatis mutandis*—the system is much the same in the other districts. Moreover, since the cultivation of gooseberries and currants has not hitherto thriven there—growers being discouraged partly by the length of time elapsing before the bushes become productive, and partly by a blight which has attacked them—these fruits may be dismissed with the remark that the enterprising grower who can afford to wait a while for his harvest will, if he can successfully combat the blight,

reap a rich harvest, since the limited supply of both fruits, and of currants in particular, ensures good prices being obtained.

To grow strawberries and raspberries profitably on anything like a large scale, there are three things essential. The farm must be situated within a sufficiently short distance of a station, to admit of the fruit being easily transported to the markets; it must be near enough to a town to ensure a constant supply of labour on a large scale; and, finally, it is obvious that the land must be well adapted for the culture. It is a somewhat curious fact that our ideas as to suitable soil differ materially from those of our southern friends. Here it is thought that the best ground for growing strawberries is a light gravelly soil—for choice, reclaimed moor or woodland—which to the Kent or Hampshire farmer would appear most unlikely to produce good crops.

RECLAIMING LAND.

The process of reclaiming moorland is, as may be supposed, a costly one. The first operation consists in what is known as 'trenching'—that is, turning over the ground with spades to a depth of two or three feet, according to the character of the soil, great care being taken to avoid breaking through the crust into the subsoil proper. Trenching is usually done by piecework, at the rate of not less than one shilling per pole; and the cost per acre is therefore at least eight pounds. The result of the trenching is to leave a most unpromising-looking surface, which to the eyes of the casual observer resembles nothing so much as a shingly beach. The next step is to try and equalise to a certain extent the balance of power between earth and stones by gathering up a few tons per acre of the latter. The amount of stones that can be taken from the surface of an acre of ground without materially altering its appearance would afford a good subject for the delectation of the statistical fiend.

STRAWBERRIES.

Having spent as much money as he chooses on this stage of cleansing his Augean stable—and, in our opinion, the less the better, since, do what he will, at least half of the soil consists of stones—the farmer proceeds to get rid of some of the superfluous weeds by planting a crop of potatoes—one of the best patent weed-killers known. The ground is then ready for planting with strawberries, which should, if possible, be done in autumn, but is as often as not deferred till spring—the middle of March or April, according to the season. The ground must

first be thoroughly manured—no small item in the farmer's expenditure, the proper amount of manure being from thirty to thirty-five tons per acre, at an estimated price of six shillings per ton. There is a very considerable degree of skill required in the apparently simple operation of planting; and, as the whole future of the plant depends upon it, the utmost care must be taken. It used to be the custom in this district to use an implement bearing the somewhat dubious-sounding name of 'dibble,' which consists of a sharpened peg of some two or three inches in diameter, with a cross-piece at the top. With this the planter made a hole in the ground, and he then proceeded to insert therein the roots of the plant wrapped closely together. This was a barbarous method of planting a strawberry, with its spreading fibrous roots, and has been generally abandoned in favour of the orthodox method of using a trowel. It is usual to leave a space of about ten inches between each plant, and of not less than thirty between the rows; for the tread of the strawberry-picker is not delicate like that of Agag, and even with this interval it is heart-rending to see how many berries his remorseless feet crush into a pulp.

It might be thought that, having once planted his fruit, the farmer had only to sit down in its shadow, so to speak, and enjoy the profits. The reality is very different. There is hardly a month in the year in which he must not be working among it. The ill weeds, which proverbially grow apace, seem to increase with lightning rapidity in a strawberry field. In the autumn and spring large gangs of workers are employed for weeks in weeding. The weeds are collected in baskets and burnt, and you flatter yourself that never another will dare to show its head in the field. It is a fond delusion; at the first shower there spring up as if by magic chickweed, bindweed, thistles, docks, and all other abominations. And so the weeding process is repeated again and again *ad nauseam*; and unless it is constantly and efficiently carried out, good-bye to the hope of having a remunerative crop. In addition to the labour just mentioned—since this form of cultivation affords a good example of the survival of the fittest, and many plants fail to survive the inclemencies of the season—the vacancies in the rows have to be filled up, which is usually done by training the runners of the survivors over the vacant spaces.

The chief enemy which growers have to face, apart from weeds, is frost. Hardly a year passes in which the crop of the early varieties is not decimated by late frosts, and it is occasionally almost totally destroyed. In the evening a field is white with strong healthy blossoms, as if it were sprinkled with snow, and next morning a careful examination reveals that most of the blossoms have brown and shrivelled centres, which will never develop into fruit.

The varieties of strawberries which are principally grown in this district are two: the Rifleman, a small early berry, deliciously sweet, which is said to make the best jam; and the Elton Pine. The last-named is a late variety, producing much larger fruit with a slightly acid flavour. The size sometimes attained by these berries is remarkable, and it is said that six or seven selected at random have been known to weigh a pound. Other varieties, such as the Garibaldi and the Royal Sovereign, are also being cultivated; and it would appear from the marked falling off in crops of late years that some new variety is badly wanted. It is an unfortunate fact, which is certainly true as regards the reclaimed moorland, that when once there has been a crop of strawberries taken from the ground it will never bear the late variety to much advantage again. Apparently they absorb some substance out of the ground which cannot by any known process be replaced. Experiments have been tried by taking a five years' rotation of other crops off the ground and then replanting it in strawberries; but the result has never been satisfactory. Of course the small grower must be contented with the inferior results produced by repeated planting; or when his plot of ground has been exhausted for strawberry cultivation, he may plant it in raspberries.

The yield per acre from the virgin soil used formerly to be most astonishing. From two to three tons of fruit per acre was no uncommon crop; and in those days of big prices the profit was very large in spite of the fact that the productive life of the plants is so short. But nowadays, for some unknown reason, which cannot be wholly ascribed to the inclement seasons of the last two or three years, the yield per acre has diminished to a remarkable extent, and is very often less than a ton. It must not be assumed that all or even the greater part of the fruit grown in this district is grown on the virgin soil redeemed in the manner described above. A great deal is grown on ordinary agricultural ground which has been reclaimed at some remote period; but certainly the best results have been obtained from the new land. Whether it is worth while to go to the expense of reclaiming ground which, after bearing its one crop of fruit, is practically useless for other agricultural purposes is a question open to doubt; more especially as it is almost impossible wholly to eradicate broom and whins, and if left to itself the ground will in an incredibly short time lapse from civilisation into savagery.

RASPBERRIES.

Turning to the case of raspberries, the lot of the grower would at first sight appear to be a more happy one. They possess this great advantage over strawberries, that the bushes are more or less of a permanency. How long they

will go on bearing if properly cared for is hardly known. In gardens bushes of thirty or forty years old may be seen producing as good crops as five-year-olds, and the cultivation in fields is still too young to estimate what is their limit of profitable production. The expenses of growing them are, however, greater, and go far to reduce the margin of profit; and, moreover, they take longer to attain to years of discretion and productiveness. While good results are obtained in the light gravelly soil so well suited for strawberries, raspberries thrive better on a richer alluvial soil. It is usual to plant them after cleaning the ground with a crop of potatoes, as in the case of strawberries, the young plants or suckers being cut away from the old bushes in autumn. They should be planted at intervals of three feet, in rows about five feet apart. This space is necessary not only to enable the pickers to move freely about without treading down and breaking the young canes, but also to admit of the passage of a horse for weeding purposes. When only grown in small quantities it is perhaps best to train the bushes on stakes, as in a garden; but the expense and trouble of doing this on a large scale is so great that the large farmer usually trains them on two galvanised wires, the top one being at the height of four to five feet from the ground. As in the case of strawberries, the farmer's labours have only begun when he has planted his raspberries. The weeding process has to be carried out with the same unflinching perseverance.

After the fruit has been picked, the old canes and some of the young ones are cut away, and such of the latter as are to form the bushes for next year are tied to the wires; the number left in each bush varying, according to the fancy of the grower and the strength of the plant, from five to ten. This operation, as may be easily supposed, requires both trained judgment and manual skill. An error in not selecting the best canes or clumsiness in tying may ruin the whole crop. The smaller canes are simply trained upright against the wires, care being taken not to tie them so loosely as to admit of their 'wagging' too much (in which case a gale of wind may do great damage by snapping them off when heavily laden with fruit), or so tightly as to interfere with the free passage of the sap. As regards the treatment of the taller canes, opinions differ. Some years they grow so luxuriantly as to attain a height of seven or eight feet, and manifestly they cannot be treated in the same fashion as their smaller brethren. There are some who cut off a foot or two of the canes and train them straight up the wires, and think that thus shorn they bear as well as when left their full size. Others—and theirs is probably the better course to follow—have a system of arching, or 'bowing,' as it is technically called; but this again is a process requiring great skill. You must humour the

cane, commencing to curve it gradually from the root in such a manner that the bush resembles the shape of a fan. Too often the unfortunate canes are trained straight up for three or four feet, and then roughly bent and twisted horizontally along the wires, so that the stem ultimately becomes utterly gnarled and distorted.

INSECT AND OTHER PESTS.

Every three or four years the raspberries must be treated to a plentiful dose of manure, and an allowance of forty tons per acre is not too much to give them. But even with the kindest treatment, they too often disappoint expectations. It is true that, thanks to their long tap-roots, they do not feel the effects of summer droughts so much as strawberries. Nor does the frost affect them to any appreciable extent. A far greater danger is that the young canes will flower and even fruit in autumn. The canes which do so are usually the strongest and comeliest; and if the farmer is careless enough to select them as his mainstay for next season he will have but a miserable crop. There may often be seen in a row of bushes thick with foliage and hanging with fruit a number of withered dried-up sticks. These are the canes which have wasted their strength and energy to no good purpose in flowering the previous year.

But, apart from this danger, there are others and worse to be apprehended, for which there is practically no remedy. There are at least three insect pests which too often destroy the promise of the season. The first of these is the Raspberry Moth or Borer, which, when in the form of a small caterpillar, pierces the soft, juicy part at the base of the buds, and prevents the shoots from expanding. There can be no doubt that the harm done by this caterpillar is sometimes very great. It may be somewhat alleviated by forking into the ground at the roots of the bushes a mixture of soot and lime, in the autumn or early winter; but the only real remedy is the somewhat drastic one proposed by the Board of Agriculture—namely, cutting down and burning the infected canes.

Another enemy who does less real mischief, though his appearance is more alarming, is the Raspberry Beetle, who employs himself in eating out the heart of the berries while still in bud and in flower. But since these beetles only attack the individual flowers, and their capacity for food is not inexhaustible, the mischief done by them is less than it would appear to be, though at times they are seen in such myriads that it would seem likely they would destroy the whole crop. Spraying with paraffin appears to discourage but not to destroy very many of them, owing to the fact that they have wings, which they use with considerable agility on the approach of danger. The beetle is in appearance something like a dark and rather dissipated-looking ladybird.

Last, and worst of all, is the much-dreaded Raspberry Weevil. He is a clay-coloured animal of about three and a half lines long, with dark-red legs, and is said to have 'pitchy, twelve-jointed antennæ furnished with clubs.' His character is as bad as this somewhat formidable description of his appearance would lead one to conjecture. These weevils in the daytime live in the earth at the bottom of the bushes, whence they come out at night in immense numbers to feed. They are not content with nipping off individual berries, but bite half-through the stem of a cluster of ten or twelve, so that the damage they will do in a single night must be seen to be believed. No remedial measures are of much avail. They do not come out by day, and if you

hunt for them in the earth, they either pretend to be dead, when they are practically indistinguishable from the surrounding soil, or burrow out of sight with an alacrity which would put an armadillo to shame. Some growers send out men at night to hunt them with lanterns and cloths soaked in paraffin. These they hold under the bushes and tap the wires, whereupon the weevils fall down into the cloths. It is a fascinating sport; the weevils rattle down like hailstones, and there is great satisfaction in burning your enemy in bushels, for that is the practical effect of the paraffin upon them; but it is marred by the feeling that you might as well be trying to bale out, say, the Mediterranean with a teacup.

A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.



WHEN these explanations had been made, I understood why Wang had successfully imitated Archimedes, who, according to the Latin Syntax, was so absorbed over some problem of defensive mechanism with which to protect his city that he did not perceive that the enemy had already entered it. (A similar absorption, by the way, is one of the chief dangers in the game of *wei-ch'i*, as it is in chess. And I was able to form at least an excuse for his hopeless toil, because I was already aware of his arduous literary studies: he wanted to raise himself to the rank of a 'literate,' or (not to fool with pedantic obscurities) a gentleman. For I must tell you that a knowledge of the game of *wei-ch'i* gives a man a greater standing in the polite world than a knowledge of the classics. None the less, this ambition was less intelligible than that of humane letters, because it was scarcely credible that an unlettered man would ever have an opportunity of entering the society of players. I pointed this out to him.

'You savvy good, master,' he replied admiringly. 'You very much savvy China pidgin.' Pidgin is a catholic and inestimable word; see how it serves here for that untranslatable abstraction, 'society'! 'But I tell you why, *tung chia*. In my count-a-lie'—

In Hunan, to cut him short, there was a high military official, General Ho, to wit, commandant of the provincial troops at the capital city of Chang-sha, who five years previously had offered a reward of a hundred taels (twenty pounds) to any fellow-provincial who should succeed in beating him at a game of *wei-ch'i*. Now, this challenge was not, of course, addressed to his fellow-officials (the pleasure of meeting a good player would be of more importance than a pecuniary prize to any true 'son of the 19-square

board'); it was held out as an incentive to the graduates of Chang-sha (perhaps the principal seat of classical erudition in China) to study the game, and it was well known that the General was wont to make a donation of from ten to fifty taels to those who accepted his challenge and made a fair show, though beaten; even fifty taels being sufficient to support a student for a year, the minimum time of exclusive practice considered necessary to play a fair game at *wei-ch'i*. And this challenge was open to all; the General, one of the very few military men who was also a 'literate,' would be probably more pleased to see the son of a coolie accept his challenge than the son of a viceroy. This was Wang's opportunity—a rare and beneficent one, but of a sort which is always being held out in other lines of endeavour by a paternal bureaucracy. If he could accept the General's challenge, and make a fair show; if, by some incredible blessing, he could *beat* him, his local fame would be secure for all time, like the fame of a graduate who has passed his third examination at Peking, and whose name is preserved on tablets in immortal honour of his village; and with the education he had already given himself, a victory would undoubtedly let him through one of the back-doors of the bureaucracy, without having taken his degree. All this sounds very medieval in our ears, like the prizes offered for painting and music in old Germany, which opened the doors of fame to humble talent; but China is still medieval, in some things even antique. Now is the time to preserve such medievalisms, for they are about to dip over into the modern slope.

On learning that Wang had so practical, though remote, a goal for his ambition, I immediately entered into the spirit of his dream; I not only secured him a certain number of hours of uninterrupted tranquillity daily in one of my own

rooms, but assisted him still more by taking a personal interest in the game, and frequently posing as his opponent. Although I did not pretend to master the intricacies of the board, my 'new blood' was of considerable value to him, for hitherto the poor fellow had always played against himself.

For three more years Wang continued in my service, and never for one day, except at New Year time, did he intermit his patient, persevering study of the game. Sometimes, it is true, a spirit of despair crept over him as the bewildering complications of the board grew with the increase of the lines, and then he would grow sick, and more than once I feared it would be the death of him. I was obliged to support him with wine and delicacies, and I did it willingly, even anxiously, for I was beginning to regard him with all the vigilant interest of a prize-fighter's trainer. This remote and mysterious contest, which, for all I knew, might have already lapsed through the General's death or indifference, penetrated me with the vague iceberg romance of Eastern idiosyncrasy, and I declare I was as anxious for his victory as he was. You cannot refrain from admiring, and gradually believing in, a fixed purpose, no matter what its object; there is nothing in all humanity so sublime and god-like as this common trait of tenacity. Wang had now mastered the 18-line board, and was preparing to tackle the full one.

But, alas for Wang! his brain was not entirely narrow enough to be concentrated on a foot-square board to the exclusion of his country's ill-fare. Ever since the war he had been concerned with the vital question of China's future, which no enlightened Chinaman living in daily contact with Europeans could pretend any longer to ignore. Wang now understood and spoke English well; and while waiting behind my chair at my own table and those of others—for it is the custom to take your boy with you when you dine out—he had gathered from our conversation a very clear impression of the intentions of European nations. And he did not favour the notion of the dismemberment and servitude of China. A good deal of utter bosh has been talked about the Chinaman's lack of patriotism. I doubt if so much national pride exists elsewhere. Wang was a thoroughly enlightened man; knew all about civilisation, and knew its benefits; knew Englishmen and Americans, and cordially admired them; and his unhesitating decision was, that the ancient policy of his country of driving the foreigner out of it was its only salvation. I argued this with him again and again; but his answer always was: 'We are as good as you; we want you as friends, as merchants, as teachers; but we do not want you for masters. And until we have first driven you out, we are not in a position to invite you.' I pointed out the difference between the Chinese army and the Japanese, by way of example; but

he appositely replied that the Japanese had conquered the Chinese army, but had not ventured to settle in China. 'All your armies together,' he said, 'cannot spare more than a million men to garrison the coast; and what are one million against a hundred million in the long-run?' As usual, his single-mindedness persuaded me; and, while not admitting that violence and the interruption of trade was good, I granted that we could not occupy China by force if the Chinese people resented it as a nation. This difficulty of forming a national opinion in a few years stopped him; but, none the less, he became a conspirator.

When the Germans occupied Kiau-chao, and the Russians New-chwang—confound the abominable jumble of journalistic spelling!—Wang became badly troubled; he worked at his chess-board feverishly, but he conspired as well. Then came the news of Yu Man-tzu's rebellion in Sze-chuan, embodying the Young China party's creed of ousting the obsolete Government and asserting China's independence of foreigners. 'I very sorry, master,' he said one day, 'but I must go.'

'You will be a great fool, Wang,' I replied; 'better wait and see how things turn out. You are no soldier, you know.'

'It no belong soldier pidgin to lead a nation,' he replied. 'It want a clever man, who have brains, and know what he fight against. I must go.'

I laid my hand on the *wei-ch'i* board. 'And leave this?' I said. 'You more better stop to learn the 19-line, and then perhaps can talky General Ho. Form a party, win over some high officials, and you will have something to go upon.'

Wang gazed sadly at the board; I knew it cut his heart-strings to abandon this safe and solitary study of his growth. 'You no savvy Chinese official,' he said mournfully; 'he never betray the Emperor. If he do, he betray rebel to get back again. Only can speak to the people.'

In short, Wang left me, and took the up-steamer to Hankow, whence he could now get steam passage to Ichang, if not all the way to Chung-king. Chung-king is the true centre of China, and will probably become the capital of the new Chinese Empire when the great contest for national independence begins. It stands on the Yangtze, over a thousand miles from its mouth, accessible to trade, but not to invasion, by reason of the gorges and rapids between it and Ichang; it is in the province of Sze-chuan, and has for some years been open to foreigners by treaty. On his way up, Wang proposed to stop at Yochow and take native boat by the Tung-ting Lake and Siang River to his natal place near Chang-sha, there to open a 'lodge' among his always turbulent fellow-provincials of Hunan. Peaceful and unassuming as he was, he was just the man to gain an immense influence as a demagogue. He 'talked reason;' that is everything in China. And a

cautious, thoughtful leader is just what Chinese rebellions have always lacked, because any prudent man has always known that they are foredoomed to failure. Effete and unarmed as the Chinese Government is, no rebellion, not even that of the Taipings, or of the Mohammedans in Yunnan, has ever really shaken the dynasty at Peking. But now, at last, rose a prudent man, far better versed in foreign politics than any member of the Tsung-li-Yamen, who recognised that for the first time a rebellion was demanded of *patriotism*. As I had been ready to back him for the *wei-ch'i*, so was I now ready to back him to raise a national party in arms, a thing which has never yet occurred in the history of China. Rebellions hitherto have sprung from the discontent of failures. I knew, of course, that he would fail; but I believed that, if he escaped decapitation for a year or two, he would set a ball rolling that would wipe the Manchu eunuchs off the face of history. I was not without anticipations of having a finger in the pie myself.

It must not be supposed that I had all this time been remaining idly at Kiu-kiang buying curios. The war had rather put an end to that business, owing to the anti-foreign feeling aroused, which rendered excursions into the interior unsafe; and I was not one of those drummers who buy all their specimens through the help of a *compradore* and in the shops of Hong-kong and Shanghai. Besides, the war had given me larger fish to fry. The air was full of the everlasting railway, telegraph, and mineral concessions; and I was acting as agent for a certain syndicate to construct the much-talked-of trunk-line between Hankow and Peking. This business shortly took me to Wu-chang, the capital of the Liang Hu (the two Hu provinces, Hunan and Hupeh, which form one viceregal satrapy, like the two Kiang); Wu-chang is opposite Hankow, the tea-port.

At Wu-chang, to my great interest, I was brought into personal contact with the identical General Ho of the *wei-ch'i* challenge; and the challenge, I learnt incidentally, was still open. Ho had been appointed director of the steel-rail works, positively in active progress, for the Chinese Government now hugged itself in the belief that since railways had been proved by the war to be a necessity, China was able to build them herself. Ho was a subtle, impenetrable, resolute, but withal courteous and pleasant man, perfectly at ease with foreigners, and not in the least interested in their politics or inventions. He had not the slightest belief in the railway, and was employing the

foundries in casting cannon, and using the steel rails as breastworks in a new fort he was constructing to command the approaches to Hankow; in justice to him I must state that, in addition to the directorship of railroads, he had also been appointed Imperial Commissioner for the Defence of the Upper Yang-tze, and had doubtless received his private instructions as to which of the two matters was the most pressing. Ho was, in fact, owing to his literary standing (unusual in the military class) and his connection with the high conservative faction of Hunan, in considerable favour just now at Peking; for it is a singular thing that at all the crises in the foreign relations of China—crises which invariably result in the tardy admission of new encroachments—it is the old bigoted anti-foreign party which sways the councils of the empress. Thus it happens that at the moment of writing, when China is about to remove the last barriers which obstruct its modernisation, conservatism is more rampant at the palace than it was during the Opium War.

My tale does not progress, and I dare not say anything more about the 'affairs of the nation,' although just now they are brimful of romance. Finding that the syndicate would be simply wasting money in applying for their concession, I resigned their agency, and entered Ho's service as translator of European works on fortification. His comments on this modern art were often intensely interesting; and, in spite of their antiquity, they were always shrewd. Thus, for instance, he was sceptical about long-range guns, which would hit so accurately at distances far beyond human vision; and he turned the tables on me by quoting Gordon's own advice to the Peking Government, to arm their troops with muzzle-loaders. A month later came news of the first disquieting success of Yu Man-tzu, and simultaneously of a rising of Hunanese, led by Wang Lai-chee; and it was again the General who was appointed to chastise these rebels. Ho made no to-do about the matter; suppressing so-called rebellions had been the principal business of his life; and he knew the ropes far too well to disturb himself or his leisurely duties. He issued the stereotyped proclamations, and sent the stereotyped periodical reports of victories for insertion in the Peking *Gazette*, and sat still and waited; and in due course of months the rebellion fizzled out, and a few score of unfortunate prisoners were brought by boat to Wu-chang. Among them, and honoured with a wooden cage as a ringleader, was poor Wang.



THUNDER-STORMS AND HOW TO PREVENT THEM.

By R. J. J. IRWIN.

THE ever-advancing science of the present day would seem at last to have recognised the all-important part which electricity plays in the ordinary routine of everyday life, and to be learning slowly though surely not only to enslave it for the general good, but also to safeguard the community against the many dangers which lurk beneath its potent agency.

Already we have begun to look upon telegraphs and telephones as inventions of the past, and to turn on the electric current as naturally as we do the gas in cases where a brilliant light is desirable. Again, should we require intense heat in our manufacturing processes we have immediate recourse to the 'battery,' and we even harness the electric giant to our tram-cars and motors, and compel its assistance in the perfecting of our photographic discoveries.

Thus far electricity is but the docile slave of man, who deliberately produces it for his own use and benefit, and whose only care need be that his creations stop short of actual Frankenstein proportions. *Home-made* electricity we might indeed call it in contradistinction to that other and more terrible kind which is made, not indeed 'in Germany,' but in a country remote from our terrestrial sphere and by the hand of an All-wise and Omnipotent Creator.

Of our earth-made electricity it may truthfully be asserted that it is reducible to certain well-known laws and limits, and is capable of being measured by recognised standards of intensity and power; but what known scientist can fix the length of the spark or determine the electrical potency of the lightning-flash?

Grand, however, as it undoubtedly is to watch the lightning and listen to the reverberations of the thunder, we each and all of us—say what we will—instinctively dread it, knowing it to be so frequently destructive to life and property. Now, this being so, I hope to do more than interest the general public by showing how a simple rearrangement of the so-called 'lightning-conductor' will do much towards making it an infallible *dispeller* of all thunder-storms, by enabling it to deprive the atmosphere of one of the component parts of those dreaded electrical disturbances.

To the most of us this lightning-conductor is a familiar object, which inspires us with a sense of safety if (during a thunder-storm) we enter a building to which it is attached. We no doubt have been brought up with the idea that if a flash of lightning were to visit our immediate neighbourhood it would infallibly make straight for the 'conductor' and through it pass quietly and harmlessly into the ground! This,

doubtless, is what it was *intended to do* by the accommodating engineer who prepared such a convenient passage for the visitor, for—as you may remark—the metal rod, or rope as the case may be, is most carefully insulated from the structure, which merely serves as a high point of vantage to carry the metallic road which the electric fluid is expected to traverse.

Now, is this preconceived notion of ours the correct one? I mean, is it absolutely correct in every particular? Personally, I think *it is not*. In fact, for many years I have held some very decided views on the subject; and in order to show that in my opinion thunder-storms really *can* be averted, I purpose explaining those views as clearly and in as *unscientific* language as I can.

Perhaps I should begin by explaining what lightning is; but were I to attempt doing so, I know I should be deafened with the indignant exclamation of '*It's electricity*' shouted at me from far and near. In adopting this answer as correct, however, I will merely remind my readers that there are different kinds of electricity, as we learned in our schooldays, and that, instead of being identical with the 'home-made' article I have above alluded to, the lightning-flash more nearly finds its counterpart in the *frictional* electricity which lecturers use for Leyden-jar experiments, and produce by the rapid rotation of a plate-glass disc between properly prepared rubbers.

Many of us will doubtless have witnessed with pleasure experiments of this kind, and will have had our memories refreshed on the subject of *induction*, or the production in another body, and without contact, of an electricity dissimilar to that experimented with. That is to say, we will have seen how 'positive' electricity obtained direct from the glass disc will *induce* negative electricity in an adjacent body upon which it acts through some non-conducting medium such as dry or heated air. The familiar example of this is the Leyden-jar, which, when charged (internally) with 'positive' electricity, has upon its outer tinfoil surface an *induced* 'negative' fluid capable of producing a brilliant spark when allowed to approach sufficiently near to the positive conductor.

Well, then, in the lightning-flash we have, on a large and magnificent scale, a perfect counterpart of the Leyden-jar discharge, in which the earth has played the part of the *outer* tinfoil coating, carrying on its surface a powerful charge of the 'negative' electricity *induced* thereon by the 'positive' contained in the overhanging cloud.

Before, however, we replace upon its shelf our old-fashioned friend, the Leyden-jar, I will ask you to assist me in making with it a simple experiment which will go far to prove the truth

of what I am about asking you to believe. It is this: I place the jar upon its stand and attach it in the ordinary way to the electric machine from which I proceed to charge it. Before doing so, however, I connect the outer coating of the jar with a brass knob which I place within a few inches of that other knob which remains in contact with its interior, and I find, as I work the disc of the machine, that when a sufficiently powerful charge has been imparted to the jar an automatic discharge occurs and a brilliant spark passes between the two knobs. This, of course, is what I anticipated, inasmuch as, the resistance offered by the non-conducting air-medium having been overcome, the two electricities have automatically reunited.

I now substitute for the first-named (or may I call it the 'negative'?) knob a cluster of brass points, and once more proceed to turn the handle of the machine with the intention of charging the Leyden-jar as before. The result this time, however, is simply *nil*! No discharge takes place, notwithstanding that the glass disc is revolving even more rapidly than before; and upon using the discharging rod I find that the jar is *really* as empty as it appears to be. Yet the electric connections of the jar have not been interfered with in any way, and the brass points occupy the same position as the knob for which they have been substituted. What, then, has occurred to prevent the discharge and brilliant spark we at first witnessed? Why, simply this: the 'induced' electricity has been draining away through or from the points as quickly as it became formed, and quietly reuniting with the 'positive' fluid which was being deposited on the inner coating of the jar. In fact, the process has been much the same as when water is poured into a sieve.

We may now put away our Leyden-jar and apply the lesson learned from it to the thunder-cloud, the earth, and the lightning-flash; the one being, as I have told you, the counterpart of the other. The earth, you will remember, occupies the position of the outer coating of the jar, or the one to which the spikes were attached which prevented the electrical discharge taking place.

'Exactly so,' I will be told. 'I see and understand it all now.' But the lightning-conductors we see around us *are* so many clusters of spikes projecting from the earth, and yet the thunder-clouds and the lightning seem to disregard them altogether. In explanation of this I simply say that 'something in the way in which our electrical appliances are constructed is wrong;' and I now propose to devote the remainder of my paper to pointing out to you what that 'something' is and *why* it is wrong.

The generality of persons, I think, know little, if anything, of a lightning-conductor beyond what they can ordinarily see of it—namely, that it consists of a copper band or wire rope which is generally fastened to a building with glass or earthenware

insulators, and that it has a lot of spikes at the top and runs into the ground at the bottom. This, I take it, is a generally correct description; to which I may add that after running a few feet into the ground it is usually attached to a plate of copper about three feet square and about a quarter of an inch in thickness. Now, in all this—so far as it goes—the only thing really wrong is the insulation and the earth-connection.

I look upon such an instrument as incapable of producing any (or at least any very appreciable) beneficial results, and I would merely say of it that 'if it does you no good it will do you no harm.' To my mind the real use of a lightning-conductor—or, as I prefer to call it, a '*lightning-protector*'—is in no way to attract or carry away the electric fluid from the clouds, but to discharge or quietly pass off into the atmosphere the 'induced' electricity from the earth and from the buildings, &c., upon it. The general substance of the earth, it must, however, be remembered, is not a very good conductor—I mean as though it were altogether made of metal—so that with a lightning-conductor, constructed as I have described, the induced negative electricity passed off towards the cloud is in reality little in excess of that existing in and about the copper-plate.

Hence it is that our lightning-conductors, so called, are not of more apparent utility, and seem, as I have said, to be completely ignored by the thunder-storms. Of course I am quite prepared to be told that they frequently *are* of great good, and save buildings by conveying in safety to the ground the actual lightning discharge, which otherwise would have completely wrecked them. To such persons I would merely say that were a lightning-flash to really strike their 'conductors' it *could not possibly* disperse itself through the earth without digging a big hole at the point where it left the metal and entered the ground. I may further assure them that in all probability the lightning would completely *fuse* the conductor in its attempt to pass along it from top to bottom.

As I have endeavoured to explain, then, in order to convert our 'lightning-conductors' into *lightning-protectors* we must, in the first place, do away with insulators altogether (as has already been done in some few instances), and connect them as closely as possible with the roofs of our buildings and with all metal eave-gutters, rain-water pipes, and lead flushings, &c.

I attach especial importance to having this roof-connection as perfect and extended as possible, inasmuch as the tension of induced electricity is always greatest at the point nearest the inducer; and hence during a thunder-storm there is more of it, so to speak, about our roofs and spires and high places generally than on the actual earth-surface itself. Next, as regards the connection of the lightning-rod with the ground—for, of course, it is quite correct that it should be

carried on down and into it—the object aimed at should be not so much to take it to any depth below the surface as to make the connection as complete and extended as possible—as, for instance, by attaching it to iron gas and water mains and the services therefrom, or even to iron railings which themselves have an earth-connection. A perfect connection with tram-lines or railroad metals would consequently be a very desirable one to have. I may explain, as a fitting termination to this portion of my subject, that electricity invariably passes along and is found upon the *surface* of any body or conductor instead of *in* its actual substance, and hence a flat ribbon or band of copper (as affording a greater superficial area) forms a better ‘conductor’ than one of cylindrical form.

Having thus remodelled, as it were, our existing appliances in connection with electrical disturbances, and thereby increased their efficiency, we may be perfectly satisfied that much has been done towards ensuring our safety during thunder-storms, and the robbing of the angry elements of their terrors. It remains, however, to be seen what further steps can be taken towards lessening the dangerous recurrence of the lightning-flash or even preventing it altogether.

If, then, you have clearly understood the gist of the foregoing paragraphs, you will, I think, have little difficulty in following my reasons for advocating the adoption of the following measures. My readers will, I trust, accurately appreciate the atmospheric condition of our surroundings when a thunder-storm threatens, and will bear in mind that, owing to the inductive influence of the overhanging cloud, not only the ground we walk but even we ourselves (as shown by our headaches), and everything else thereon, become highly charged with *negative* electricity with which the *positive* fluid of the cloud is endeavouring to reunite so as to establish an equilibrium.

Now, as I have shown, it is towards the rooftops and the higher points of the surrounding eminences that this terrestrial electricity becomes attracted, for the same reason and in the same manner that iron or steel are attracted by the magnet; so that to prevent the lightning discharge, by causing a gradual and harmless

reunion of the opposing electrical forces, all that we need do is to provide a sufficient number of metallic points through or by which the induced electricity may pass away. The number of so-called ‘lightning-conductors’ which at present exist would of course—when remodelled in the manner I have described—constitute a goodly number of such points; but these might be efficiently and almost indefinitely supplemented at a comparatively trifling outlay by the adoption of the following suggestions:

In the first place the ridges or apexes of our roofs should invariably be covered with *iron*, made in lengths, and similar in form to the earthenware tiles now in ordinary use, but having attached to them at suitable intervals *sharp* metal spikes, which may be so arranged as to form a portion of any ornamental pattern that may be desired. These ridge-coverings should be attached by wrought-iron straps (running either under or over the slates) to the ordinary metal eave-gutters, which latter must in turn invariably have a close metallic connection with the top ends of the rain-water pipes and hopper-heads instead of being only laid into them as they generally are. The aforesaid wrought-iron straps should be firmly screwed to the spars or rafters, and connected with both eave-gutters and metal ridge-covering by bolts and nuts. Finally, all chimney-stacks and ornamental finials, &c., should carry on their highest points clusters of spikes in metallic connection with the iron ridge-coverings aforesaid, and similar to those at present used to complete the tops of our so-called lightning-conductors.

In conclusion, I beg earnestly to offer a word of advice to every one having to do with lightning appliances, and that is to be always most particular in keeping the terminal spikes both *clean* and *sharp*, as much of their efficiency is found to depend upon their being maintained in this condition. With this parting injunction I leave my readers to think over for themselves the reasons I have put forward in proof of the assertion that thunder-storms can be prevented. The question is—Would the adoption of these suggestions have the desired result? As an architect I have had some experience of these matters, and *I believe it would*.

HIGHLAND SEERS.



IT is easy to ridicule the idea of any human being possessing the power of peering into the future, and no doubt many self-styled ‘prophets,’ wise after the event, have been impostors pure and simple. But that genuine manifestations of a phenomenal prescience have existed, and do exist, there can be no reason-

able doubt. The common explanation of this attribute is, that the possessor of it is endowed with an abnormally acute intelligence, which suggests the occurrence of future events, hidden from the mental view of the ordinary man. But that explanation is obviously incomplete and unsatisfactory.

Where, then, lies the explanation of *clairvoyance* or second-sight? That is a question which has

exercised the minds of wise men in all times, and it may be doubted whether a satisfactory answer has yet been given. The suggestion may, however, be made that, as in rare instances men are gifted with genius (which, after all, is something more than a mere 'capacity for taking pains'), so, in still rarer cases, may there be men upon whom the gift has been conferred of discerning—within a very narrow compass, it may be—certain events which lie hidden in the womb of the future.

In the Highlands of Scotland the gift of second-sight was, until comparatively recent times, a cardinal article of faith among the people. In the more remote parts, indeed, it is still firmly believed in; and at the present day one may meet men and women who are popularly believed to have 'the sight.'

It can be readily understood that among a people who, by nature, training, and environment, are superstitious a belief in the occult should be prevalent. But superstition and a belief in second-sight need not necessarily go hand-in-hand. Dr Johnson, in his *Tour through the Hebrides*, devotes particular attention to the subject. Superstitious to a degree, he strove to reconcile with his strong common-sense the deep impression left upon his mind by the evidences which he saw of the gift possessed by the seers, and the extraordinary accuracy of their 'sight.' He summed up his conclusions thus: 'By the second-sight seems to be meant a mode of seeing, superadded to that which Nature generally bestows,' and consists of 'an impression made either by the mind upon the eye or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived and seen as if they were present.' Martin, who is our principal authority on the Hebrides of the past, gives his impressions thus: 'It—the sight—consists in seeing an otherwise invisible object without any previous means used by the person that sees it for that end; the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers that they neither see nor think of anything else except the vision as long as it continues, and then they appear pensive or jovial according to the object which was represented to them.'

A peculiarity about those who saw, or were supposed to see, a vision was, that they kept their eyelids erect and continued to stare until the vision vanished. Martin gives an instance of a seer in Skye, the inner part of whose eyelids was turned so far upwards during a vision that after the disappearance of the object he found it necessary to draw them down with his fingers; and cases are on record where the seer found it desirable to employ others to draw them down for him!

Incomparably the greatest of Highland seers was Kenneth Mackenzie, better known in the Highlands as Coinneach Odhar, who lived and prophesied during last century. He was a native of the island of Lewis, but migrated when young

to the mainland, where he attached himself to the household of his chief, the Earl of Seaforth. Coinneach was, for a man of his station, very intelligent, and it is not unreasonable to argue that some of his prophecies may have been the outcome of his natural shrewdness. He foretold, for example, the construction of the Caledonian Canal at a time when no such scheme had been mooted by any engineer of his day. But how can one explain the wonderful fulfilment of the disasters which he predicted for the Seaforth family? It was his last prophecy, and was uttered when on his way to the stake, there to be burnt alive as a wizard, by order of Lady Seaforth. He had given mortal offence to that lady by conveying to her, at her own request, the result of a vision which reflected upon her husband's constancy. The explicit nature of Coinneach's last prophecy is shown by the following record of it. These are the seer's words: 'I see into the far future, and I read there the doom of my destroyer. Ere many generations have passed, the line of Seaforth will become extinct in sorrow. I see the last male of his line both deaf and dumb. I see his three fair sons, all of whom he will follow to the grave. He shall sell his gift lands, and no future Seaforth shall rule in Kintail. A black-eyed lassie from the East, with snow on her coif, shall succeed him; she shall kill her sister, and she shall be the last of the Mackenzies of Seaforth. In those days there shall be a daft Lovat and a buck-tooth Chisholm, and they shall be the last direct males of the line. When these things are, Seaforth may know that his sons are doomed to death, and that his broad lands shall pass away to the stranger, and that his race shall be no more.'

Every detail of this prophecy was fulfilled more or less literally. Francis Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth, the last male of his family, was deaf and dumb, the result of an illness which he had contracted: 'I see the last male of his line both deaf and dumb.' His three sons all died before their father: 'I see his three fair sons, all of whom he will follow to the grave.' He was obliged, on account of financial difficulties, to sell his Kintail property—'the gift lands,' as they were called—which, according to tradition, were gifted by Alexander III. to the progenitor of the Mackenzie family, Colin Fitzgerald, who saved the king's life when hunting: 'He shall sell his gift lands.' He was succeeded by his daughter, Lady Hood, whose husband, Sir Samuel Hood, had died in India. As she was in widow's weeds when she returned to England, the seer's prophecy that a 'black-eyed lassie from the East, with snow on her coif, shall succeed him,' came literally true. The prophecy that she should kill her sister was not literally fulfilled; but in view of the fact that her sister died as the result of a carriage accident when Lady Hood (afterwards Mrs Stewart-Mackenzie) was driving, the

prediction came to pass in a sense, after all. The 'daft Lovat' and the 'buck-tooth Chisholm' of the prophecy actually lived during the time of the last Lord Seaforth. The concluding part of Coinneach's prediction has come too true; for the 'broad lands' of the Seaforth family have indeed 'passed away to the stranger.'

Coinneach Odhar's sayings have been current in the Highlands for many years, and even at the present day they have a limited currency among the West Highland peasantry. They were not unknown to Sir Walter Scott, who makes reference to them in some of his letters (*Lockhart's Life*).

Tradition says that the gift of second-sight was acquired by Coinneach by means of a white stone which he found on his breast one day upon awakening from a hillside slumber. It was

asserted that this stone gave the possessor miraculous power, and was used as a kind of telescope for peering into 'the dim, uncertain future.' When the seer was on the way to his death, he threw the stone away, after uttering the fatal prophecy about the Seaforth family. It is said to have fallen into a pool of water which is now Loch Ussie. At the bottom of this loch (so tradition has it) the stone shall remain until an Elisha, with well-defined characteristics, shall succeed the Highland Elijah. The successor, who is to find the magic stone inside a pike, has not yet appeared; so, presumably, the stone will remain at the bottom of Loch Ussie until he does. For all the successors of Coinneach Odhar have indeed been 'minor prophets' in comparison with him.

NO MAN'S LAND.

I may not hear the summer rain upon the parched ground
fall,
Nor can I watch the shadows wane when sinks the great
red ball;
Though hosts on hosts of startled ghosts troop ready to
my call.

THE wind rustles through the poplar-trees that sway in
the garden hedge;

The little blue-tit has his hole in the wall and his perch
on the window-ledge;

The holly-tree kisses the warm red bricks, as it always
used to do;

And the horse-shoes lie where we laid them down, a
motionless, mocking crew.

The grass on the lawn, so dank and long, is the grass
that once was ours—

Ours in the desolate autumn gales, ours in the summer
showers.

Six bonny days out of seven it lay, a carpet white,
yellow, and green,

While the seventh was claimed by a jingling fiend, the
conquering mowing-machine:

I hear it now as I hear the birds in the apple-trees
chatter and call,

As my footsteps sound on the worn old paths that never
could weary nor pall.

The peonies burst in the summer's prime 'neath the
smiling sunny sky,

Their heavy heads hang down to the earth that will
cover them up when they die.

The chinks in the tottering summer-house let the trick-
ling rain-drops in,

While the spiders are spinning silvery webs from the
ceiling down to your chin.

The lilac shadows the privet hedge, purple and spotless
white:

Does it smell as sweet as it used to do in the days
beyond our sight?

The stars come out, and the sparrows hush in the
sheltering holly-tree,

The owls 'tu-who' in the stackyard dim, and the fox
barks distantly;

But far away, where the firelight falls, and shutters hide
Charles's Wain,

I hear the blackbirds whistle and sing in the sun after
heavy rain,

And I see the growing daffodils spring and the bright
beech-buds unfold,

Or watch the sea-birds hover and sink when the east
wind sweeps the wold;

And if I tire of the dawning year, and pine for a
summer day,

'Tis here as soon as my thought is sped, to brighten the
gloom and the gray.

The morning breaks on the yellow corn, golden as gorse
in bloom;

And there comes the clang of the reaper sails as they
gather the wheat to its doom.

The partridges rise with a whirr and a cry as I trample
the stubbles down,

And the guns ring clear where the leaves are sere and
the fern is a rich ripe brown.

When the year lies dead and the snowflakes come to lull
Mother Earth to sleep,

And diamonds deck the sun-kissed fields, where daisies
may not peep,

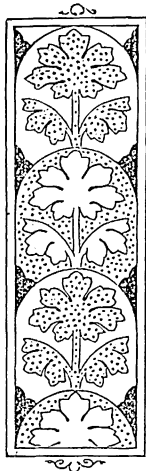
The sun goes down in a blaze of red, and I wander
homeward away,

To dream that To-morrow 'twill be the same—To-morrow
is never To-day.

To-day is claimed by the waves and the tide; 'tis only
written in sand,

But memory knows no time nor tide: her kingdom is
No Man's Land.

B. M. DANBY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE WILD SWAN OF AUSTRALIA.



THE legislative councils of most of the Australian colonies have proclaimed stringent regulations for the preservation of their native animals. The kangaroo, the emu, and the swan are now protected by nearly all the colonial governments, and rigorous restrictions have been issued against their being captured, killed, or hunted; and yet, notwithstanding these official enactments and the more sensible fact that these animals have become very scarce, they are still to a considerable extent hunted in the outlying districts whither the usual course of judicial supervision cannot be expected to extend.

The kangaroo and the emu are typical of the fauna over the whole area of Australia, whilst the swan may be considered particularly characteristic of the western portion of the continent. The first settlement in the western colony was made at the mouth of the river then christened and thenceforward known as the Swan River, and the capital of the colony is situate on this same river; and although, with the growth of the metropolis and its seaport town, the extensive settlements on the river, and the general increase of population, it may be difficult in these days to discover even a single specimen of the swan species anywhere in those localities, there are other parts of the colony where the birds may still be met with in flocks of hundreds.

One has only to glance at a Western Australian postage-stamp to see that the swan is officially recognised as the emblem of the colony. It has been not an entirely unknown thing for some cynical and ill-disposed individuals from amongst that money-making class of people who, under the name of prospectors, visit the colony to look for gold, and whose experience of the western lands is confined to the arid plains of the inland districts, where water is a scarce and costly commodity, and food is obtainable only in the form of tinned goods, to deride the idea of any living animal being used as a representation of the

colony, asserting that the only true and correct emblems of so inhospitable a land are a water-bag and tin-opener! Slight inclination have people of that class, possessed of little but self-considerate and mercenary ideas, to realise the comparison between the dry, sterile tracts of back-country, which form the goldfields where they had fondly hoped their fortunes were to be found, and the beautiful rich alluvial districts of the south-west coast, renowned for its equability of climate and fertility of soil. It is in these parts, where creeks are plentiful and pastures rich, that the tamar and the wallaby, the ibis and the crane, the opossum, the pelican, the duck, and the swan, delight to have their retreats; and it is here also that the perfection of the colony's flora as well as fauna is to be looked for.

The native swan of Australia is not the very beautiful white bird which adorns so many of the English waters, but the more ordinary-looking black swan which is invariably an exhibit of our Zoological Gardens, and is noted more especially for its fierceness and strength. As far as appearance goes, the black swan is certainly not as attractive as its more ornamental cousin, neither would it lend so picturesque an addition to an English landscape; but when seen in its native state, sailing in large flocks peacefully, contentedly, and apparently with perfect unanimity of inclination on some sheltered lagoon, amidst surroundings of rising country clothed with rich herbage and thick virgin forests, its presence and appearance is most impressive, and causes one to feel that the beauties of the scenery around would count for little without the living complement of feathered creatures so sedately and gracefully gliding along the water's surface.

It is a matter of comparatively little trouble to obtain views of these birds in their immense flocks, but the true difficulty is to get them within gunshot range; and in hunting the black swan it must be remembered that the sport is not simply a pleasure and a pastime—the birds

are sought after for a very practical purpose, and their acquisition is of considerable value. It seems hardly needful to refer to their down, but it may be mentioned that that obtained from the breast of these black swans is exceptionally beautiful and snowy white, the outer and coarser black feathers being removed before the down itself is exposed. Although the extent of one breast is small, the covering is so wonderfully thick and spreading that it can be divided up into many yards' length of the finest and softest swansdown.

Supposing we are located for a time in the south-western districts of Western Australia—let us say at Albany, that picturesquely situated and clean little town on the shores of King George's Sound, well named the health-resort of the colony—how are we to set about gaining a glimpse and possibly a shot at these native swans? If the season happens to be towards the end of summer, a day's outing in a buggy and pair some twelve or fifteen miles to the westward towards the Torbay or Wilson Inlets can generally be depended on for affording a good view of one or more flocks on the lakes in the distance; but if the unsophisticated visitor takes out his gun in the hope of obtaining a shot, he will find these distant glimpses a very different matter to the feat of getting the swans within range.

He may wade for hours in the shallow water, hoping to get within even two or three furlongs of the birds, without success; he may divert them from one quarter of the lake, and by the exercise of much exertion and great speed may head them as they are making for another quarter, only to find, however, that his intention has been quickly detected by the ever-wary birds, which turn in a body as if with one impulse and glide away to a distance again, leaving him to wonder at the marvellous keenness of their intellect. He may even, with the assistance of companions, try to circumvent them by posting his men at various points on the lake shore, and at a given signal making a simultaneous descent towards the flock in the centre. In this way he may manage to keep the group in a more confined space and get a trifle nearer to the birds, but with little extra advantage. Perhaps our would-be sportsmen have taken care to employ the stratagem of bearing green boughs for the purpose of disguising their distrusted human nature; but the artifice will prove ineffectual. They will wade on laboriously in the shallow water until, gaining confidence in their leafy covering, they begin to feel their blood rising and throbbing through their veins in increasing excitement as they gradually approach their quarry, when—the space on the lake being now too restricted to allow of their usual evolutions—the whole flock of birds with one accord take to flight, and they soar away up and up, until almost out of sight. One realises how impossible

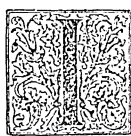
it would have been to believe that those distant specks were in reality anything more than a group of the tiniest birds. Our dejected sportsmen are then left to gaze and wonder at the marvellous strength of wing these wild birds are possessed of!

If all the usual methods are so equally unsuccessful, how is one to get at these birds? Well, it is not a matter of one outing, or even of three or four days, but rather of weeks; there is only one plan to be adopted, and this, to be successfully carried out, will need perhaps a whole month's attention and care. One must proceed in this way: a raft, flat-bottomed boat, or some such craft must be got quietly and cautiously down to the shore of the lake which the swans frequent—the very best time of day for accomplishing this first step being the early morning soon after dawn, when the birds will very probably be away feeding up some adjacent creek. Great care must be exercised at all times not to disturb the birds, and so cause them to be even more timid and wary than usual. The next step is to thoroughly screen our dingy or raft with dark, thick boughs to prevent any object or any movement inside being observed. The craft thus equipped had better be left quietly on the shore for a day or two, when it can be moved a little, say along the edge of the lake, the intention all along being to get the birds thoroughly accustomed to this new addition to their surroundings, encouraging them in the belief of its innocuous and inanimate character. Gradually the boat may be moved about more, and allowed to drift on the lake, but must always be brought back to shore after its daily cruise, as everything would be upset if the birds once caught sight of a human form wading to or from the craft. It will in all probability be three or four weeks before the swans have become used to this branchy structure and its movements; and until it can be manifestly seen that they entirely disregard its presence it will not be safe to allow it to drift down towards them. This is the last precaution, and then for the grand coup! With three or four shots from each gun in the boat an excellent bag should be assured; but good-bye to the chances of any other party getting near the birds for many a month to come!

This mode of procedure may seem to have the demerit of tediousness and wasteful expenditure of time; but the spending of a few weeks under canvas in the free wilds of Australia, in the closest contact with the picturesqueness of untouched nature, is a delightful and health-giving recreation which must be experienced to be appreciated. When there is added an extra zest in the shape of a novel and engrossing sport, there can be no more inviting and invigorating relaxation from the routine of one's more prosaic and conventional life.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE LAST MESSAGE.



In truth, Kennett himself was none too soon. The new-comers dashed round the corner within a minute of his departure—six peace-officers in all, well armed and mounted; and behind three of them, having evidently been picked up by the way, were perched the postillions and Joseph.

Staring hard, they pulled up and saluted.

‘You would have been of more service ten minutes ago,’ said my lord sharply. ‘We have been waylaid by a couple of pads, and this gentleman is wounded. We must get him to the nearest inn with all speed’——

‘Had we not better carry him to his own house?’ I suggested, with his daughter in my thoughts.

‘Is it close to this?’

‘Not more than a quarter of a mile.’

‘The Dower-house be it, then! I have my own scratches to examine—oh, they are not serious, but I am not young enough to neglect them—and so I care not how quickly we seek shelter. Besides, we have *his* feelings to consider—and Miss Hollingworth’s.’

Half-an-hour earlier this intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of Sir Charles would have amazed me beyond measure. Now it seemed so natural that I spared it scarce a passing tribute of wonder. I was more surprised by an incident that presently happened. Joseph was fussing round, as if to make amends for his recent conduct; and, having fetched the cloaks of the late combatants, he pressed forward with an object that he had picked up beside them—to wit, Sir Charles’s mask and false beard. The man had some intelligence, and I noticed his glance wandering inquiringly to my cousin’s prostrate figure. But my lord was not one to be caught napping. He thrust the mask carelessly into his pocket, and then addressed the servant in his sweetest tones.

‘So you have returned to your duty?’ he asked. ‘Well, I have this bit of advice for you—that unless you wish to be whipped at the cart’s-tail from Newgate to Tyburn for your cowardice, you will keep a still tongue in your head about your doings to-day.’

Joseph shrank back, abashed and frightened. With him no better method could have been adopted to prevent a disclosure of the truth.

And apparently such was my lord’s intention. He permitted the officers no time to grow inquisitive. The coach having been dragged from the ditch without much difficulty, he despatched four of them forthwith in ostensible pursuit of the pads, and ordered them to report to a justice

whom they would find at Devizes; and he had even the forethought to ask them to search out the nearest surgeon—at Seend or elsewhere—and send him post-haste to Langbridge Dower-house. And if the main road were hardly likely to lead them to success—well, he had doubtless other reasons for indicating it.

Two men remained behind for his escort, and with their help Sir Charles was gently placed in the coach. He was still unconscious.

The coach was stopped for a minute or two at the gate of the Dower-house, while I went on alone to warn its inmates of that which was coming. The house looked strangely gloomy to my eyes in the darkness of the overhanging trees; the nature of my mission lay heavy on my spirit; and I had to summon all my resolution to carry it through without faltering. And my task was not lightened when my knock was answered by Kitty herself.

‘You, Cousin George?’ she exclaimed. Then, catching a glimpse of my tell-tale countenance, a note of anxiety came into her voice. ‘Dad—something has happened to him!’

‘You must be brave, Kitty,’ I said, taking her hand. ‘Your father has had a duel with Lord Kynaston’——

Her face blanched. ‘Oh! he is not dead?’ she cried.

‘Not that,’ I said. ‘But he is wounded—badly, I fear, but we cannot say yet.’

I could perceive that she dreaded the worst, and thought for an instant she would break down. Yet I dared not mislead her, and my faith in her courage was vindicated.

‘You are keeping nothing back?’

‘Nothing—I know I can trust you to be calm. Now you must get his room ready. He will be here in a minute.’

She rallied nobly at the necessity for action, and at once set about the preparations, calling the maids to assist her; and, in the meantime, I made an opportunity to ask Mrs Herbert to receive my lord and attend to his comfort. The matter was not one with which, just then, I cared to trouble Kitty.

I need hardly have concerned myself. When the little procession presently arrived, she had eyes for nothing save the inanimate form of her father; and as he was carried to his room by myself and one of the officers—who, I had learnt, professed some skill in surgery—she accompanied us upstairs, holding his hand. But, reaching the landing—whence, looking back, I observed my lord being ushered into the parlour by Mrs Herbert—I begged her to stay there until we

had undressed and examined the wounded man. Her suspense must have been hard to bear, but there were measures to be taken which would be still more painful to a delicately nurtured girl. At first, however, she would not hear of it.

'Only for a little!' I pleaded. 'Believe me, Kitty, 'tis for the best. You will but hinder us.'

Then she submitted. 'If I must,' she said. 'And you will let me know quickly, George?'

I gave her my promise; and, with a last glance at her father, she retired. Thereafter our grim work was soon accomplished. The result may be told in a word. My worst anticipations were realised: the hours of Sir Charles Hollingworth were numbered. For the right lung was pierced, and although there was little flow of blood—in itself a doubtful symptom—the indications of the end were too many and too plain to be mistaken.

Having done what we could for him, an effort was used to bring him back to consciousness, and at last was successful. Opening his eyes, he recognised me. Then his gaze rested on the officer; and, not wishing to excite him unduly, I signed to the man to leave the room.

'Ah! I remember it all now,' said he as I leant over him. 'But how did I come here, George?'

'I have the responsibility of that,' I replied. 'Now, you must not move. We have sent for a surgeon, and you are under my orders till he arrives.'

The old smile returned. 'Our positions are changed, then? Well, you had the better luck. I'm bleeding inwards—I knew it from the beginning, George—and not all the surgeons in England can do me any good.'

For a little he lay silent. Then:

'Shall I call Kitty?' I asked him.

'Not yet,' he said. 'I have a word for you first. . . . You will find your valuables in the top drawer there, George—I had always, of course, intended you to have them again. You forgive me that affair? We had news of a messenger for Kynaston, and were after the papers. The rest belonged to the part I was playing, but had I not discovered your name from some letters in your pocket-book—well,' he added, laughing feebly, 'you might not have been rescued so opportunely by Mr Morell! . . . And to think that Kynaston had me in the hollow of his hand all the time! If I had only guessed it— But there! 'twas a crack-brained scheme at the best, and has had a fit ending. If it weren't for Kitty, I should not be sorry to be quit of it all. . . . Poor Kitty!' he went on presently. 'Her only friends are the Sisters at St Cloud—and I have little to leave her but a good name. There will be nothing for her but to go back to the convent, and till she can do so—will you promise to see to her, George?'

'Have you not forgotten that she has other friends—her relations?' said I, revolting from the mere idea of a convent life. 'My mother, for one, would be happy and proud to welcome her as a daughter—indeed, she would never forgive me if I failed in my duty. You will let me take Kitty to her, Sir Charles?'

His hand sought for mine on the counterpane, while his face brightened wonderfully. 'If you would, George!' said he. 'Now I believe that, after all, our meeting was providential, and I can die easier.'

Then I slipped out to Kitty, drawing the door to after me. She was waiting on the landing, and her eyes questioned me with a pathetic little look. But what had I to tell her?

'I am no surgeon, dear'—

She cut me short. 'Oh! I can bear to hear the worst—*now*.'

'He is quite conscious, and may live for a few hours,' I said gravely. 'You will not talk too much?'

I opened the door, and heard a sob strangling in her throat as she ran to the bedside and fell on her knees beside it. My own eyes, to confess the truth, were not too clear.

'Don't weep, little one,' Sir Charles was saying as I turned away. 'The parting is bitter, but . . . you have your life before you.'

His voice was weaker when I was recalled, a few minutes later, to the bedside.

'We have taken you at your word, George, and settled it all,' said he, 'and from this moment you are Kitty's guardian. I leave her to your charge with the utmost confidence.'

'And I will spare nothing to prove myself worthy of the privilege,' said I. 'But you have spoken enough, Sir Charles. Now you must rest for a little.'

'Does it matter much?' he asked. 'Well . . . a single minute, and I promise obedience. Listen, Kitty! The Prince must be warned—at once, do you understand? There were other plans, and Kennett is too hot-headed—and he must be told that Kynaston knows of his presence here, and has him surrounded. Implore him, as my last request to him, to do nothing more if he values his neck; to flee from England without an hour's delay! . . . And be quick, dear! Even now it may be too late. . . . Ah!'

A thin trickle of blood came from his lips, and he dropped back insensible. His heart was still beating fitfully, but all my attempts to revive him were unavailing.

'Can we do nothing?' cried Kitty, appealing to me.

I shook my head: there was nothing to be done save to watch—for the end.

'And the Prince?' I asked after a time.

'The Prince? . . . Oh! I had forgotten. *Must* I go, George? Yet I cannot leave dad—*thus*.'

'He is still at the Hall?'

'Yes.'

I had a sudden impulse. 'If you wish it, Kitty, I will go instead,' I offered. 'I heard the message, and 'twill be better than sending a servant.'

'But you would never find the way through the park in the darkness,' said she, hesitating.

'As to that, one of the maids can easily be my guide.'

Then she agreed, and did so gladly, and I went immediately to carry out my self-imposed duty. While I was waiting in the hall for the maid I was joined by Mrs Herbert, and from her learnt that my lord was closeted with Joseph in the parlour. I had no mind to disturb him just at that moment; and, my guide appearing with a lanthorn, I sent Mrs Herbert upstairs to Kitty, and set forth.

Outside, the officers and postillions were walking their horses up and down the avenue, and trying to keep warm by dint of exercise and much profanity.

'Mighty cold, sir!' remarked one as we passed. 'You can't say if we shall be here long, perhaps?'

'It depends upon his lordship,' I replied, and could give him no further satisfaction.

The night had fallen, but, with a clear sky and the reflection from the snow underfoot, our way was sufficiently plain, and the lanthorn almost a superfluity. The first stage, across the garden to the little bridge, was already familiar to me; and thence we had seven or eight minutes' brisk walking ere we came within view of the lights of the Hall. There, convinced that I should be able to return alone, I dismissed the girl homewards.

A couple of horses were standing in front of the house, ready saddled, and the main-door was wide open. Approaching it, the first man that I perceived was Kennett himself. Habited for riding,

just as I had last seen him, he was pacing the great, dimly-lit, armour-embellished hall; but at sight of me he stopped, and his face flushed a dull red. Then his hand wandered—instinctively, it seemed—to his sword.

'I can guess your errand, Mr Holroyd,' he cried before I could speak. 'But if you come from Lord Kynaston, let me warn you that we shall not be taken alive.'

'You have guessed wrongly,' I replied, misliking his tone. 'I am not here on business, but with a message from Sir Charles.'

'Ah!' A quick breath of relief escaped him. 'The wound is not serious, I hope?'

'He is dying,' I said shortly. 'The message is for the Chevalier. Can I see him?'

He looked as if he were about to deny all knowledge of such a personage, but he thought himself in time that I had other information.

'Impossible!' he exclaimed.

'He is still here?'

'Is it not enough, sir, that you cannot see him?' he demanded, suspicion showing in his eyes. 'If you give me the message, be sure he shall receive it. And, for the rest,' he cried, his temper flashing out, 'your presence in this house is cursedly unwelcome!'

'I have not lacked proof of it,' I retorted. 'As to the message, I have nothing to add. It must be delivered to the Chevalier himself—and to nobody else. If it be not, the blame will be yours for any consequences that may follow.'

I know not how the dispute would have ended had we been left to ourselves, but at that moment 'twas broken in upon by a calm voice behind us.

'Who is this gentleman, Mr Kennett?' it asked.

Turning, I beheld the Chevalier.

FRUIT-FARMING IN SCOTLAND.

PART II.

THE FRUIT-MARKET.

FROM our last article it may be seen that the cultivation of both strawberries and raspberries is itself no sinecure, and that it is no easy matter to produce a good crop of either fruit. Having got his crop, however, the further question remains, How is the farmer to pick and dispose of it? His difficulties with regard to the latter point are by no means small. The small grower, with his acre or half-acre of ground, can always reckon on finding a market for the comparatively small quantity of fruit which he can supply.

He can either sell it for eating purposes, in which case it is usually sent to be sold on commission in the markets of the large towns, or he will have no difficulty in finding a ready sale for it with the jam-makers. But the large grower, who despatches every season from eighty to one hundred tons of fruit, has a more difficult task. Accordingly, every year before the fruit is ripe the grower and the boiler and the ubiquitous middleman begin to haggle over terms. There is perhaps no commodity of trade which is subject to such fluctuations in price as is fruit. The last three or four years have afforded an excellent illustration of this. The price of strawberries in these seasons has varied from ten pounds to thirty

pounds per ton, and that of raspberries from fifteen pounds to the phenomenal rate of forty pounds. At the former prices the cultivation would not pay its expenses, while at the latter the profit would be handsome. How can the grower decide what price he is to hold out for? He cannot wait, with his fruit rotting on the ground. He is perfectly sure that if he stands out for a higher figure prices will go down, and he is equally sure that if he sells at the prevailing rate they will go up; and he has excellent examples from former years illustrating the truth of both his convictions. The mere fact that his own crop is a poor one is no criterion as showing that others are equally poor; and it is the most difficult thing to obtain anything like a reliable report as to the character of the general crop, it being the interest of growers to depreciate and of boilers to exaggerate its size. Another difficulty is to determine the quantity of fruit which he is safe in selling. He meets this as far as possible by selling a certain amount which experience shows him should be well within his margin, and disposing of the remainder as a balance. But since the amount of his balance is necessarily uncertain, the price obtained for it would be lower than that which he would get for a fixed quantity, and the temptation to sell within a very few tons of his estimated crop is strong. A shower of rain at the critical time may make all the difference between ability and inability to fulfil his contracts, and the sanguine man who trusts to luck may find himself with his contracts unfulfilled and not a berry left to supply the deficiency, while the timid man is gnashing his teeth at finding that he has a large and comparatively unremunerative balance.

FRUIT-PICKING.

As, year by year, the area under fruit cultivation increases, there is an increase in the difficulty of picking the fruit. It is absolutely essential to be within reasonable distance of a town; but even so the supply of pickers is no longer equal to the demand. A farm of seventy or eighty acres in fruit will require a constant supply of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty pickers; and even the latter number, in the height of the season, when the raspberries and late strawberries are ripe together, cannot cope with the fruit, tons of which are sometimes lost from inability to pick it. The pickers are divided into gangs of from thirty to seventy, and are under charge of an overseer, who has his hands full in keeping them at work, and checking as far as possible their voracious appetites. His position calls to mind that of a slave-driver; but, unluckily for the grower, his powers are limited by the knowledge of the pickers that if they are unduly driven they have only to cross into the next field, where they will be welcomed with open arms by the rival farmer. The work begins at

about 6 A.M., and is continued, with an interval of an hour for dinner at midday, till 4 P.M. Wages vary from about one shilling and eightpence to two shillings per head, irrespective of the quantity picked. It would appear to be a far more satisfactory arrangement to pay them by the work done, at so much per basket; but in this district no one has yet been able to introduce that system. When the crop is in full swing each picker, if well worked, should be able to gather something over three-quarters of a hundredweight of late strawberries and half a hundredweight of raspberries. It may easily be seen that the small grower, who is able both to weed and to pick his crop with the aid of his family and perhaps half-a-dozen hired hands, has not to meet the difficulties of the large farmer, and that his profits are proportionately larger.

In picking fruit for eating purposes the pickers either carry baskets holding from five to seven pounds, in which the fruit is sent direct to the market, or else gather it into those small punnets containing about a pound, the appearance of which in shops is so familiar to the eye. These punnets are then packed in crates or boxes containing four or five dozen. It is only fair to the retail fruiterer to say that the mysterious law of physics, by which the large berries invariably gravitate to the top of the basket, appears to hold good when the fruit is gathered by unsophisticated rustics, to be sent to market, almost as surely as when it has been prepared for retailing to the public.

FRUIT FOR THE JAM FACTORY.

The method of picking to send to the jam-maker is the same with both raspberries and strawberries. The pickers carry a large basket slung round the neck, which they partially fill with fruit and empty into pails brought round by men specially detailed for the duty. The fruit is then transferred to juice-tight kegs or barrels, and in them is sent to the jam-maker. These vary in size, but are usually constructed to hold about one hundred weight of fruit. It may come as a shock to the consumers of bought jam to learn that the fruit out of which it is made is treated in this cavalier fashion; but it is astonishing to see how fresh and sweet a cask of good honest Scotch fruit will be on its arrival after a journey of thirty-six hours—that is, if it has been picked dry. Unfortunately it is not always dry in Scotland, and a hundredweight of wet fruit, after being jolted over three or four hundred miles in a goods train, is apt to present a somewhat uninviting appearance. Still, if used before fermentation sets in, it makes very nearly as good jam as the dry fruit.

If only Scotch or English fruit were used by the boilers the consumer would have no reason to complain. If he were to see the quality of the foreign fruit with which too many of them

doctor up their jams he would certainly hesitate before eating. To save a few shillings, a boiler will use barrels of foreign fruit, which he picks up at a low price, and which is nothing more nor less than a seething mass of fermentation, no more fit for human food than any rotten fish condemned at Billingsgate. That some strong measure is required to meet this ever-increasing abuse is certain, in the interest not only of the home-grower, whose margin of profit grows smaller year by year, but also of the consumer, who has a right to expect that his jam shall not be adulterated with this poisonous stuff. Any attempt at obtaining further legislation on the subject is met by the old parrot-cry of protection; but it is surely not demanding very much to insist that jam made either wholly or partly with foreign fruit should be marked as such. If once the public would realise the nature of the stuff which they are sometimes called upon to eat as 'home-grown jam' the evil would not be tolerated for a moment. Even if the provisions of the existing Merchandise Marks Acts were more thoroughly enforced, a great deal might be done to check the evil. Much might be done by railway companies in cheapening their freights, so as to enable home-grown to compete in the market with foreign fruit; and it is only fair to them to say that in the last year or two they have shown some disposition to do this. It must be understood that this indictment is not intended to apply to all jam-makers; but it is an undoubted fact that it does apply to many, and that the quality of the foreign fruit thus used has in no wise been exaggerated in the present description.

LOSSES AND CROSSES.

The quantity of fruit which is despatched all over Scotland, to the north of England, and to Ireland, in the manner described above, is enormous. Given three hundred pickers, picking their proper quantity, one grower will send off his seven or eight tons a day. With so great a quantity, each barrel having to be separately addressed, mistakes must sometimes occur; and, in dealing with such a perishable commodity as fruit, a misdirected barrel may be a total loss to the grower. The picking season is indeed an anxious time for him, and every day brings its cares. One boiler telegraphs to say that his works are closed for a week owing to holidays, and that he cannot take fruit during that time; another that he can only take fruit despatched by an early train; and a third that he has already more on his hands than he can boil, and that he can take no more at present. They one and all,

with surprising unanimity, try to avoid taking fruit gathered on Friday or Saturday, and seem to be entirely oblivious of the fact that it will go on ripening and going to waste on both these days, and even on Sundays also, as much as on any other days in the week. As they have only a short day at their works on Saturday, the boilers expect the fruit to stand still and await their convenience at the beginning of the week. The grower naturally does not see the reasonableness of this, and hence arise many bickerings, and much profit to the telegraph department of the revenue and occasionally also to the legal profession. At the end of a day spent in struggling to extract a reasonable amount of work from lazy pickers, in despatching numerous telegrams to obstinate boilers, and in wrestling with the intricacies of the traffic systems of pig-headed railway companies, who refuse to guarantee connections, the unfortunate farmer is inclined to wish himself well out of the business. Fortunately for his sanity, the season is not of long duration; six or seven weeks see the end of it, and he may then sit down for a short time and count his profits, if he have any to enjoy.

PROFITS.

It cannot be denied that these profits in some individual years are large, and in such they amply repay the trouble and expense of cultivation. They are, however, by no means so large or so regular as they would appear to be to the casual observer, who notes that the farmer may get his ton or two of fruit per acre, and calculates that with reasonable prices he should have a gross return of forty or fifty pounds per acre. The expert who has made an accurate study of the trade—who estimates the expenses of planting, weeding, and picking, and who realises the constant anxieties and heart-burnings which accompany the cultivation, the losses resulting from the inclemencies of the season and the insect pests, and, lastly, the uncertainty whether anything like a fair price will be obtained for the crop—will be disposed to agree with the writer of this article that the lot of a fruit-farmer is not altogether a happy one. The truth of the matter is that this trade, like every other in the country, is being overdone. It is only under very favourable conditions that it can at this date be carried on profitably on a large scale. In short, fruit-farming, while it still affords an opening to a man who will count the cost before he takes it up, is no longer—if it ever was—the farmer's panacea; and the wise man will pause and reflect before following Mr Gladstone's advice to rush into fruit.



A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



WANG'S long-cherished ambition of meeting General Ho and accepting his challenge to play a game of *wei-ch'i* was brought within reach by the very act which renunciated it. He had abandoned the *wei-ch'i* board for rebellion, and rebellion had brought him a prisoner into the presence of Ho.

After due consideration I ventured to intercede for Wang, although, by acknowledging that he had been in my employment, it rendered me also a suspect.

'I should be pleased to help you, Kê Hsien-sheng,' Ho replied; 'but you must know that this is a case beyond my powers of interference. The man is at present my prisoner; but when the instructions come from the Board he will be handed over to the civil authorities. If you think you have any sound plea, you may speak to my friend the Chik-fu.'

I knew this Chik-fu, who was named Ta Yüeh; he was an almost nightly visitor of Ho's, being a *wei-ch'i* maniac. But he was not a man I would think of expecting mercy from, being fat, avaricious, and deceitful. Small as my acquaintance was with him, I already guessed, from my frequent presence during their game, that there was something which attracted him to Ho's *yamen* more powerful than the General's *wei-ch'i* skill; and that was the General's *wei-ch'i* board. Ta's chief hobby was curios; he had a fine collection of antiques, and he knew the intrinsic value of them. And Ho's board was probably the most precious curio in the length and breadth of China. It was made of common white porcelain, set in a rude ebony frame, and the men also were mere shapeless pawns of chinaware; but it was of great antiquity, and this was its value—it was authentically believed to have actually belonged to Confucius. Instead of black and white squares, those which should have been black were darkened by close and beautiful small writing in the epistolary character, each of the 162 squares containing a verse from the master's classics. These were supposed to have been written by a pupil under the great philosopher's own dictation, probably before he revised the 'proofs,' so to speak; for here and there they varied by a word or phrase from the standard text, and it was not credible that any student would commit such a sacrilege or betray such an ignorance as to misquote from the Sacred Bible. Besides, very ancient commentaries were in existence on this identical board; and, finally, a large seal-character *Kung* was carved on the bottom of the ebony—the signature of the master himself. The value of this board, then, was literally inestimable, for I

doubt if such a relic could have been sold for cash without serious danger from the Board of Censors; but if allowed to be auctioned, I believe it would have fetched one thousand pounds. I have not the slightest doubt Chinese connoisseurs would give nearly all they possess to obtain a relic which virtually ennoble the possessor, and such relics become family heirlooms, just as certain jewels do among our own old families. The only way for a foreigner to obtain genuine antiques is to 'be in at the death' of an old family, to wait until they are hard-up, and then very delicately to hint at a mortgage on the heirlooms.

'I could not venture to speak to Ta Lao-yeh,' I replied. 'I am in your excellency's service at present, and I can only intercede with your excellency. This poor Wang! *Wei-ch'i* is responsible for his fault. He came back to Hunan to accept a certain mandarin's challenge at the game, for which he has been studying nearly five years.'

'Ah,' said Ho, 'is that so? I never yet heard of *wei-ch'i* turning a man into a rebel, unless, indeed, it reminds him that China was formerly ruled by Chinese. I will inquire into it.'

Thus it came about that a state-prisoner was permitted to play against his jailer for his life; for it was held that if Wang could beat Ho it would prove conclusively that he could not have found time to be a conspirator. I will not say that any promise was made to this effect; but as he had not yet been proved guilty of rebellion, a virtual promise was made that he should be proved innocent. My evidence of his good behaviour for four years previous to his departure would be supported by the exhibition of his skill; 'And besides,' the fat Chik-fu added slyly, 'a hundred taels will always go a long way in a state trial.' The General did not commit himself to anything; a rebel's life had grown to be a trifling matter in his estimation; but a good game and a flattering proof of the utility of his long-standing challenge were of importance. 'Play with a single mind, Wang Lai-chee,' he said. 'A successful crown to your long study is more desirable than a paltry question of law.'

Thus reassured, Wang commenced the game of his life. Just at first he was naturally nervous, to say nothing of being out of practice and in ill-health; but on the whole these things were really all in his favour. The interval that had elapsed since he last touched a pawn had removed the staleness of long training; and the danger of his position, the disappointment of his failure, and the change from overstrained activity to a narrow, tranquil concentration, all served to sharpen his wits and fortify his natural caution with a certain desperate will. The General captured the first

corner without difficulty, and as he did so I shuddered at the stern, contemptuous eye he rested on his prisoner. The capturing of a corner is the simplest stroke of the game, only requiring two moves; but as the moves are made alternately, it is equally easy to frustrate. Ho placed his first man on one of the two points; Wang should have occupied the other, or made a counter-demonstration against another corner. Instead of doing so, he placed his man by the side of Ho's; and it was at this exhibition of ignorance that the General's eye seemed to say, 'You do not know the game. Woe for you, my man.' Seven moves later Wang laid down his pawn and said quietly, 'I eat your excellency.'

With three men he had drawn a line across the captured corner, thus scoring three points—the corner, and the two occupied by Ho. He had turned his mistake into a stratagem. The General evacuated his positions with an approving nod, and thenceforth looked to himself. By the end of the first night's skirmish Wang was accepted both by his opponent and Ta, who was umpire, as a respectable antagonist.

The game, I must add, was played on the famous 'board of Kung Fu' which I have mentioned; this was one of the privileges held out by Ho to aspirants in his original challenge ten years ago, and Wang had proved his acquaintance with the matter by reminding him of it. This alone was something for a student to boast of in after-years, that he had actually played on 'Kung's board.'

This fact proved an intense attraction to the Chik-fu, Ta. Ho had, I believe, shown him the relic on his sombre ebony cabinet; but it was a very different thing to see the precious plaque daily used before his eyes, under the bright light of the electric lamps with which I had been instrumental in furnishing Ho's *yamen*. The game was continued nightly, and every night Ta was present, however pressing the work at his own *yamen* in connection with Wang's rising; and every night the greedy acquisitiveness with which he eyed the board seemed to increase, until I was really alarmed lest he should steal it. On the third night Wang had enclosed thirteen points to the General's ten; they played very slowly now, and each isolated position was taken and retaken, mined or outflanked, before it was definitely secured and left for new developments. At the beat of the first watch (between one and two in the morning), when the play ceased for the night, Ta beckoned to his pipe-bearer, who went out to the Chik-fu's sedan-chair, and returned with something wrapped in a cloth.

'What is this?' said Ho, passing a hot-water towel over his face, as he always did after play, dropping it back in the basin, and taking his water-pipe from another attendant. 'What surprise have you got there, Yüeh?'

Ta Yüeh displayed a very costly *wei-ch'i* board

of jade, set in a copper frame with gilded legs, beautifully carved. 'A wager!' he cried playfully; 'it is very certain you are getting beaten, General, and I desire to stimulate your skill. My board against yours that you lose; come now—*hao pa?*'

The General examined the jade board. Its intrinsic value was great, and the enamelling of the lines and coloured squares exquisite and rare. The three hundred men were also all of jade, white and green, admirably carved in imitation of the 'warrior' statue at the Ming Tombs, and representing a considerable weight of that most costly of stones. The General was not a collector of antiques, and was more pleased with things of showy value; but the Kung board was an heirloom.

'Positively, I swear you are afraid of being beaten!' said Ta when Ho refused; and with a little badinage he secured his aim; and Ho, who could not believe that he would not win, accepted the wager. To a certain extent he was a just man, and I think the argument which persuaded him was that it was unfair that he should play without risk, while Wang was playing for his life. But he may have supplemented his justice by the consideration that his only risk was exchanging a relic he dared not sell for one he could, and at a good price, too.

A large number of pieces were now on the board, and Ho confided to me after his visitor and prisoner had gone that he was uneasy lest some one should tamper with the game. During the day the table was always left *in statu quo*, the door of the room being locked. I suggested that, considering the importance this game might have for future students, it would be a good idea to photograph the board nightly, so that the whole course of the game could afterwards be printed for their use. Ho liked the idea, and gave me permission to fix my detective camera in the square lamp of coloured glass hanging over the table, focussed downwards; in this way he had only to press the air-ball which hung down a little lower than the bead tassels of the lamp, and so secure a negative of the play at any time. I took one that night to get the focus, and developed it to prove my suggestion in the morning. The apparatus was fixed during the day.

During the day I also obtained the favour of visiting Wang in prison. He had been lodged, together with the rest of the captives, in the common jail at first—a large, tumble-down cattle-pen, too filthy to describe. When the game began he was removed to a solitary cell, both in order that he might be able to present himself in comparative cleanliness, and to escape the questions of his fellow-prisoners, who would interpret his nightly examinations, unaccompanied by marks of torture, as a proof that he was betraying them. The Chik-fu, as prefect of the capital *fu*, superintended the prisons; and after the wager he

immediately saw to it that Wang should be comfortably housed and fed, as the stakes depended on his condition.

Wang informed me that he was in dire misgiving about his relatives. It is the first principle in Chinese criminal investigation to secure all the near relatives of the accused; and he knew that the Chik-fu had already despatched his runners to Kiu-kiang, on the strength of the information I had given about him. About his wife's family he did not care so much, for they had always sponged on him and derided him; but concerning his brothers he was very anxious. If they were arrested at the porcelain factory their chance of re-employment would be gone even if he could absolve them of all suspicion of complicity. But he had an idea that if he won the game of *wei-ch'i* the General would never forgive him for being the cause of his losing the famous old porcelain board. But if the General could get an exact duplicate of the board he could conceal the loss from his relatives, if he *should* lose, and be more secure from theft if he retained it. Besides, a good imitation of an antique is always valuable.

Now, Wang believed that, with the assistance of his brothers and certain materials they could obtain at Nau-chang, he could imitate the plaque. He had closely studied it during the play, and he knew both the clay, glazing, and blue required. His business during his service in the imperial factories was that of imitating antiques; and the chief difficulty in the present case, that of a certain dullness in the clay and crackle on the glaze, he had already mastered in copying an old saucer sent down from the emperor's collection. Imitation, it must be understood, is not a fraud in China; it is an art. A good imitator is considered a higher artist than an originator.

Wang, therefore, wanted me to convey a letter

to his brothers, telling them to come to Wu-chang with the requisite materials, and then to suggest the imitation to Ho. The knowledge of the secret alone would probably be sufficient to obtain for them the General's protection.

I promised to do this. I saw several objections to the idea, flaws of obvious common-sense which are always manifest in the far-seeing subtleties of the Asiatic intellect; but I forbore to urge them. I cannot tell you how sorry I felt for the poor fellow, and how elevated he had grown in my respect. I perceived now that I had had for my servant a poet, an artist, a dreamer, a man of considerably higher attainment and finer clay than myself. There was something foredoomed and tragic in his calmness. He was tranquil, clear, and quietly insistent; but his deep-sighted eyes and transparent pallor told me that this practical foresight of his was the result of an unnatural fever, and that his sudden immersion in active affairs had been a shock and improper strain on a mind naturally sedentary and introspective; and his anxiety about his relatives, his indifference to himself, bespoke that unconscious premonition of the clairvoyant intellect which is more alarming to the practical man than any actual danger.

I sent a trusted servant and former friend of Wang's post-haste to Nau-chang by the first down-steamer, and within a week his brothers had arrived. I then suggested to Ho the advisability of copying the porcelain board, since Wang believed he could do it; and Ho entrusted it to him. He had Wang removed to his own *yamen*, and the three brothers closeted together at work during the day. He made a plausible excuse to Ta concerning the substitution of a commoner board, without, of course, giving him the least hint of what was doing. Meanwhile the game proceeded.

INVISIBLE LIGHT.



HE thoughtful have scarcely yet recovered from the astonishment caused them by the discovery of the power of the Röntgen rays, and have not yet, indeed, quite realised the magnitude of the out-

look opened up by the invention—an outlook whose horizon is, in fact, widening every day.

That such a discovery should be the precursor of further revelations on similar lines was a foregone conclusion; and among these must be noted the successful experiments made by Monsieur Le Bon, the French scientist, reported recently in the *Science Française*. The Röntgen rays require delicate and costly instruments, which are not within the reach of all purses or all laboratories; it is therefore good news for those

interested in such studies that M. Le Bon announces that without an electric current, without a Crooke's tube, by the aid of a simple petroleum lamp alone, it is possible to render objects visible, even though concealed by absolutely opaque coverings—to realise, indeed, all the marvels of the Röntgen rays.

He has been experimenting for some time in this direction, and has made some very striking and surprising discoveries. The first, which originally met with little credence, but which he has since, it is said, successfully demonstrated, is an entirely new conception of light. Henceforward we shall have to admit that all sources of light furnish rays invisible as well as visible to the human eye. Up to the present it has been supposed that the 'X' or cathodic rays alone

possessed this power; but this idea has been proved erroneous. A candle, a lamp of any sort, a match even, furnishes two sorts of light—the one limpid, clear, luminous; the other non-luminous, invisible, which has very stupidly been named *lumière noire*—‘black light,’ or ‘dark light.’

The characteristic property of this invisible light—a property which it shares with the X-rays—is its power of penetration, its faculty of piercing opaque substances. Its existence is to be proved, according to the French scientist, in the simplest way, and with the most rudimentary of apparatus. For this experiment all that is required is a petroleum lamp, which is enclosed in a case made of sheet-iron, and a fragment of any printed journal. This paper is placed in a wooden box, which is then so arranged that it stands close against the metal sides of the case containing the lamp. M. Le Bon has discovered two processes by which the journal can be read while still enclosed in the box. The first of these, which takes the longer time, consists in adjusting in the front of the wooden box a sensitised plate, which, when developed in the ordinary photographic manner, reveals the text of the paper. By the second method the printing may be read immediately, in the most complete obscurity, and although entirely concealed by the wooden box. To demonstrate this, the lamp and newspaper having been arranged as previously described, a screen covered with sulphuret of

zinc is placed in front of the box. This becomes luminous, and reveals distinctly the printed characters.

What really happens is this: The invisible rays emitted by the petroleum lamp have penetrated both the sheet-iron case and the wooden box, and have reached the fragment of newspaper; and as the lamp-black, which forms one of the ingredients of printing-ink, prevents their passing, the letters are faithfully reflected on the screen. They appear like shadows on its luminous surface, illuminated by the rays that have not been intercepted.

This experience seems to prove beyond denial the existence of an invisible light with great powers of penetration, and which is always to be found as an accompaniment to visible light. The case may be simply expressed thus: There are really no opaque bodies; all substances are transparent; but, our eyes being blind to the invisible light, we fail to recognise this translucency. Like the X-rays, this newly-discovered light will operate on photographic plates, as well as render sulphuret of zinc luminous in obscurity; but it has not the same force of penetration as the Röntgen rays, and the latter will therefore be of greater service medically. The great difference between the two is that the invisible light penetrates objects very slowly. It has been noticed that as long as sixty seconds have elapsed before the radiations have reached the screen.

THE RAVEN OF FLAMBORO.

By ALICK MUNRO.

I.



ONLY once kissed Dorothy Lassen, and that was on the day when she told me she was going to marry Colin Magrath. But then, unfortunately, I am old enough to be Dorothy's father; and, as she takes a cruel delight in recognising the fact, I was immediately pardoned. Therefore, with the perverseness of an elderly lover, I lost my temper—simply because I saw I had not annoyed her in the slightest.

Dorothy laughed, and promptly put my name at the head of her list of devoted and unreasoning slaves; whereupon I recovered my temper, and accepted the position and its responsibilities.

Before her engagement had lasted a month Dorothy was in trouble, and of course she came to me for help. She walked straight into my office, and, taking not the smallest notice of the clerk who was with me, plumped down into my arm-chair, and burst into tears.

I dismissed the clerk hurriedly.

‘My dear child!’ I said in consternation, ‘what on earth is the matter?’

‘Oh, Mr Rudd!’ she sobbed; ‘it’s Colin. He has been arrested.’

‘The scamp!’ said I energetically. ‘What for?’

She looked up at me angrily, I think. ‘Mr Rudd, he didn’t do it.’ And then came another tornado of grief.

‘Of course not!’ I pronounced soothingly; ‘I know he didn’t. But you haven’t told me yet *what* it is that he didn’t do.’

‘They have arrested him for murder.’

‘What?’ I cried, and for a second wondered whether she was hoaxing me.

‘They say he has killed his brother. But he didn’t—he didn’t!’

‘Killed his brother?’ I repeated wonderingly. ‘I thought Colin was an only son.’

‘There’s a brother Robert, but he has lived abroad for a long time.’

‘Ah! And is never spoken of! Then there are reasons?’

'Yes.'

'Do you know their nature?'

'No. But what do they matter?' she cried impatiently. 'How can I save Colin?'

'Tell me the facts.'

Now, Dorothy Lassen is a brave girl; consequently she dried her eyes, and gave me a summary which would have done credit to a *Times* paragraphist. Colin Magrath had gone to Bridlington to see his brother, who had sent for him on urgent business. They went out together in a small boat. Next morning the boat was found on the shore, half-way between Bridlington and Flamboro' Head. There were footmarks in the wet sand, leading from the boat to the face of the cliff, where they were lost above the tide-mark. They were the footprints of one man only; and as Robert was not seen again, and had not paid for the boat, the waterman gave information to the police.

During the course of the next day a straw hat was picked up in the water, with Magrath written on the lining. A search was made; but they found nothing more until after the storm of Friday, when a body was washed ashore. It was battered almost out of recognition by the waves; but the doctor who gave evidence at the inquest proved that a large gash in the hair just above the right ear was covered with matted blood, and must therefore have been made some time before the man fell or was thrown into the water. Death, in the doctor's opinion, was due, not to drowning, but to a violent blow on the head with some sharp instrument. 'And,' sobbed Dorothy, breaking down again, 'they dare to say my Colin did it! Horrible! horrible!'

'What is Colin's story?'

'That his brother landed him near the Head, and then started to row back to Bridlington alone.'

'Do you know of any quarrel between them?' I asked.

Dorothy caught the implied suggestion, and the look she gave me made me feel caddish and small.

'Mr Rudd, Colin simply couldn't quarrel with anybody!'

I shook my head, but didn't dare actively to dispute the theory. Besides, I had never met the young man.

'I will go and see him,' I said, 'and make arrangements for his defence.'

'Oh, thank you!' cried Dorothy; 'I knew you would. And tell him that Dorothy knows he is innocent.'

II.



STARTED on my mission feeling sorry for young Magrath, and I returned with my toes itching to kick him. He received me coolly enough; and the very first glimpse I had of his face set my back up. I have, I am sorry to say, contracted

the bad habit of reading people's expression—a seductive amusement, but dangerous.

I introduced myself, and gave him Dorothy's message.

'Ah!' he said. 'She knows I'm innocent, does she? Really, Mr—er—er—Rudd, I think you said—doesn't that strike you as rather strange?'

I stared at the fellow in amazement.

He laughed softly. 'You don't follow me? Yet the point is obvious enough: How can she know anything about it? Why, my dear Mr Rudd, I don't even know as much myself.'

'Really!'—I began, and then stopped, utterly dumfounded.

'Of course,' he went on suavely, 'I shall plead not guilty. It's always the best thing to do in these cases. By the way, am I right in presuming that you wish to offer your services?'

'That,' I said stiffly, 'was my intention; but of course if'—

'Oh, not at all. I shall be delighted. But I had a notion that touting was forbidden in your profession.'

'Sir!'

'I was wrong? Ah, well, I frequently am. You must remember I'm an outsider, and professional etiquette has been known to puzzle even the initiated. I perceive we shall be great friends, Mr Rudd.'

'Do you?' I retorted hotly. 'I am vastly obliged!'

'Not at all; not at all. Merely a case of natural affinity. You show enterprise in extending your *clientèle*; and I admire you for that enterprise, because, as my present position perhaps suggests, I am myself a man of energy. You start? My dear sir, in that nervous movement I detect another bond between us; you are, like myself, a man of scrupulous honour. Consequently, you would scorn to identify yourself with my interests if you thought me guilty. I congratulate you, sir! The sentiment does you credit, and I hasten to relieve your mind by assuring you that the reference to my present position was used merely for the sake of the illustration; there is no implied confession of guilt in it. Besides, I think I told you I meant to plead not guilty.'

The impudent cynicism of the man revolted me, and I consider it a great proof of self-control that I did not lose my temper. But for Dorothy's sake, I would have closed the interview there and then.

'Understand me, sir,' I said frigidly. 'I am here because I am Miss Lassen's friend, and for that reason alone I am willing to do my best for you. Otherwise, your refined insolence would'—

He interrupted me with a laugh. 'What! A humorist too! Really, Mr Rudd, you are a man worth knowing! "My refined insolence!"

Charming, I assure you. Paradoxical perhaps, but quite good. You are fond of epigrams?'

I made an impatient gesture.

'Ah, a quick temper also, I see! Quite right, Mr Rudd, quite right! A man is all the better for being a little bit touchy; it is a quality which commands respect.'

I was beginning to show my anger, and that is a thing which, in business, I never allow myself to do.

'Excuse me,' I said; 'we will, if it is all the same to you, postpone this analysis of my character.'

'Certainly, my dear sir, certainly—though I admit I abandon the discussion with regret. The study of human nature is to me always enthralling.'

'Even when the rope is dangling round your neck?' I could not help suggesting.

'Even if the said rope were tightening, Mr Rudd. But you seem to have misunderstood the situation. I am in no danger.'

'You have a defence, then?' I asked eagerly.

'N—no,' he drawled. 'I can't say I have.'

'Then I confess I don't understand you.'

'My dear Mr Rudd, you are not showing the perspicacity I should have expected. If my unfortunate brother has been killed—and, mark me, I don't necessarily admit the fact—there is no proof whatever that I am his murderer. You must see that.'

'No direct evidence,' I admitted.

'Exactly. And no circumstantial evidence of any importance. They have stumbled on one or two links, I allow; but one or two links don't make a chain, even in the optimistic legal mind.'

'Others may be forged,' I remarked grimly.

'Pooh! No. I happen to know that they won't.'

'How?'

'Ah! you must excuse me; that is my secret. You have been good enough to volunteer to undertake the case; but you must expect no assistance from me. Take my advice and treat the whole matter as a joke. I myself am quite convulsed with the humour of the situation.'

'Indeed!' I retorted hotly. 'I confess I can't find anything funny in it, either for you or for Miss Lassen.'

'Poor Dolly! she has no sense of humour. By-the-bye, that reminds me: will you do me a favour? Kindly write these six words, "*The raven is hungry: feed him.*" Put the message into an envelope addressed to Mona, care of Mrs Amos, Tobacconist, Filey; and I shall be eternally obliged. I would not trouble you, but unfortunately the Post-Office does not offer its usual facilities to Her Majesty's temporary guests.'

I wrote the words down mechanically.

'You will do it?' he went on. 'Thank you!'

And now, don't let me detain you further; I have immensely enjoyed this interview. You'd rather not shake hands? My dear Mr Rudd, your discrimination is wonderful. Good-bye for the present.'

He bowed me out of the cell, and I returned to my office, walking at the rate of five miles an hour to cool myself. I have never been nearer committing an assault in my life.

III.



WHEN Magrath's case came on everything went against him, and I by no means shared his jaunty confidence in an ultimate acquittal. There was one very painful incident. Dorothy, contrary to my strongly expressed advice, was in court; and when the prisoner was led in she rose and stared at him with her eyes widely dilated, and a look of deathly terror shining in them. Then, in a low, clear voice, which was heard all over the court, she pronounced the words, '*That man is guilty!*' and dropped down in a dead faint. There was a sensation of course, and she was carried out of the court.

Her cad of a lover was the only one who was not affected. He laughed cynically, and I quite failed to persuade myself that his laughter was hysterical.

'So the fair Dolly has revised her judgment of me,' he said lightly when I visited him in his cell after the trial. 'Really, I'm afraid she is fickle, Mr Rudd.'

'You miserable cad!' I growled angrily. 'I believe you're guilty.'

'Of course you do—since the lady says so. You're a man of gallantry, I see. By the way, did you post that letter for me?'

'Yes,' I answered sullenly.

'Then I have to thank you. Now, I wager Mona will not be so ready to believe evil of me.'

'Who is Mona?' I asked suspiciously.

'Ah!' he laughed; 'it's safer not to tell you. A man of your high sense of honour might find it impossible to keep the secret.'

'Look here, Mr Magrath,' I said. 'I need no further proof that you are a scoundrel; but I have not quite made up my mind whether or not you are a murderer. You refuse to give me any help, so I warn you I shall try to do without it. And if my investigations result in my having to throw up the case, I don't know that I shall be sorry.'

He changed colour, but whether through anger or fear I could not tell.

'Turning nasty, Mr Rudd? Bah! You will find out nothing.'

'You hope so,' I said viciously, and watched the effect of my words.

'The prisoner is not bound to incriminate himself,' he quoted evasively. 'What shall you do?'

'Interview Mona. I am curious about that hungry raven.'

'Oh, that's it, is it? Well'—and he drew himself up in a theatrical attitude—'villain, I defy thee! Do thy worst!'

'I will,' said I cheerfully, and left him.

IV.

MRS AMOS, Tobacconist, Filey, was not disposed to be communicative. She didn't know who I might be, to come pokin' my nose into what didn't concern me, and she wasn't going to tell me nothing—not she! So I could just take my ounce of 'navy cut' and my change, and walk out of her shop as fast as I liked!

Her probity, I saw, was not to be corrupted by blandishments, so I took another line. Putting on my keenest look, I murmured mendaciously the one word 'Detective.' The old lady caved in at once.

'I'm sure, sir; I beg your pardon; but I didn't know you was a police gentleman. I 'ope as poor Mrs Magrath isn't in any trouble.'

'Mrs Magrath is the person who receives letters addressed to Mona?'

'Yes, sir. They lodges with me.'

'They?' I asked, with incautious eagerness.

'Her and her husband; only Mr Magrath has been away for the last few days.'

'Ah, exactly! I forgot her husband,' said I, and tried to conceal my surprise. 'Will you tell Mrs Magrath that a gentleman has called to see her on business? You need not mention the fact that I am connected with the police.'

'She's out, sir—went out just before you came; but I expect you could catch her up. She mostly walks along the cliffs towards Flamboro.'

'How shall I recognise her?'

'Easy enough. She's got a white basket with food in it for the sea-gulls, which she says she's sorry for, because the poor things looks so wild and hungry.'

Food! Could it be for— 'How often has she done this?' I asked quickly.

'Only yesterday and to-day, sir.'

It was for the 'raven!' I took a hurried leave of the obliging Mrs Amos, and started in pursuit of Mona.

Now, I yield to no one in my admiration of moonlight effects on the water, especially as seen from a Yorkshire chalk-cliff; yet, but for the fact that I was able from a distance of over eighty yards to see everything that Mona did, I should not now be in a position to declare whether there was a moon that night or not. At first my anger against the scoundrel who had so deceived my little favourite kept all other thoughts out of my head, and afterwards, when I came in sight of my quarry, the task of seeing everything without being seen was quite enough employment for even a legal brain.

The lady walked fast and far—too fast and too far for my comfort. But I put my years in my pocket, and tracked her like a young spaniel. She led me to within a mile of the Head, and then stopped. Crouching in the shadow of a thorn hedge, I was able to watch every movement. She took a parcel from her pocket, and then, having tied a long piece of string to it, lowered it, as it seemed to me, straight down into the solid earth. I waited and wondered. For a minute she stood motionless, in the strained attitude of one who listens intently. Then, giving a little gasping sob, she hurriedly snatched up her basket and started running quickly back towards Filey; and when I lost sight of her at a turn of the path she was still running.

I went to explore the place where I had seen the parcel disappear. It was a rough piece of ground, covered with sharp jags of limestone, and overgrown with a clinging tangle of brambles; but not a sign of opening could I see except an old rabbit-hole. I poked my stick into this to try its depth, and found that even when I thrust my whole arm in I could still wave the stick freely about inside. A strange sort of rabbit-hole this! I bent down to the mouth of it and whistled a bugle-call; the sound was doubled and redoubled in the hole; and after quite fifteen seconds I still heard a faint echo of the call coming back to me as a mysterious whisper from the depths of the earth. The rabbit-hole must be in communication with one of the limestone caves of Flamboro! I could not discover any indication of an entrance below; but as at that point there was no beach, and the sea even at low-tide washed the base of the cliff, it was quite possible that there might be a water-covered mouth to the cave. I marked carefully the appearance of the cliffs nearest to me, and then hurried back to Filey at a pace which, for a man of my years and profession, was not dignified, and in daylight would hardly have been respectable.

Late though it was, I managed to persuade a boatman who had the reputation for knowing ever inch of the Flamboro' cliffs to take me by water to the place where I had found my rabbit-hole. I pointed out the spot to him, and asked if there was a cave.

'Yes, sir; there be,' he said. 'But you can't get into it till the turn of the ebb, and that'll be a good three-quarters of an hour yet.'

'Then we will wait,' said I.

'Askin' yer pardon, sir, it's a queer time o' night to go cave-huntin'. What is it yer after?'

'A man.'

'Hiding, is he?' said the fellow philosophically. 'Well, he's chosen a rum place.'

I thought of Mona's terror and of my unanswered call.

'Heaven grant he be alive!' I murmured.

When the tide reached its lowest point we rowed to the cave's mouth. The distance from

the arching roof to the water was barely thirty inches.

'No use, sir; the boat won't go in. So'—he added, with a gleeful chuckle—'unless you've a mind to wait here till the next 'spring-tide, you can't touch the poor beggar.'

'How deep is the water?'

'Happen three feet.'

'Then I shall wade. Give me the lantern, and wait for me.'

I jumped overboard; the water hardly reached above my knees; but before I had gone five steps it began to deepen rapidly, and I thought I should have to turn back. All at once, however, the cave opened out, and I saw a steep shelving beach on the left, for which I made; and then stood, gazing with a shrinking horror at the weird scene around me. The feeble light of the bull's-eye lantern which I carried made the gloomy recesses of the cavern appear by contrast only the more vast and fearsome in their threatening silences. I wondered in what corner of all this black immensity I should find that which I sought. A shadow at a little distance caught my eye; I crept forward to see what it was. There before me lay a man, to all appearance dead; and the face, feature for feature, was that of the jeering scoundrel who had so lately bowed me out of his cell.

v.



AS soon after my return from Filey as possible I went to see Dorothy, for I judged that hers was the anxiety which it was my first duty to relieve. I found her utterly unnerved by excitement and grief. 'Child,' I said kindly, 'I have good news for you; I have proofs that Colin Magrath did not kill his brother.'

She looked at me in a dazed sort of way that was very pitiful. 'I don't understand,' she said simply; and then, in a weary tone, 'I forgot; you don't know. That man is not my Colin.'

'What!' I cried. 'Then who is he?'

'Robert, the brother.'

'Robert! Then the man I rescued from the cave'—

She interrupted me with a cry. 'You have found Colin? Oh, Mr Rudd! tell me you have found my Colin alive!'

'I suppose so,' said I. 'That is, if'—

'Take me to him,' she demanded.

Now Dorothy was ill, and in my opinion ought to have been in bed; but none the less I could not refuse her. I told her all I knew, and drove her to the station in time to catch the Filey train. Then, as there were several things which I did not understand, I went to interview the prisoner.

'Glad to see you, Mr Rudd,' he said jauntily. 'How is my *fiancée*?'

'Your brother's *fiancée* is quite well, Mr Robert Magrath,' I replied pointedly.

'Ah!' he laughed, 'so you have found me out. Really, you'll make quite a good detective in time. What else have you discovered?'

'I have rescued a raven which was at the point of death.'

'Very pretty, Mr Rudd, very pretty! The metaphor, however, was mine in the first instance, I believe. Still, Mr Rudd uses it aptly, as I should have expected he would.' He bowed to me ironically. 'Well, I suppose we may as well conclude that, thanks to you, my game is up. *Ve victis*. I bow to my conqueror. Is there anything in which I can further oblige Mr Rudd?'

'Tell me your motive for imprisoning your brother.'

He hesitated for a second, and then replied lightly, 'Money, of course!'

'I don't believe you,' said I.

He shrugged his shoulders. 'You don't? Even when I tell you that my brother is insured for twelve thousand, and has foolishly made no will? I have friends who would have released him when I had got beyond the reach of extradition law,' he added significantly.

'No,' said I. 'You're a scoundrel, I know; but not *that* kind of scoundrel.'

He flushed, and I believe that it was pleasure and not anger which called the blood to his cheeks.

'Thank you,' he said simply; and then with a laugh: 'Well, I'll submit another motive to you: I had a score to pay off against my brother, because some years ago he behaved badly to me—or I behaved badly to him. Choose which theory you like; one of them is the truth, but you'll never find out which. I won't tell you, and I don't think Colin will. Any other information, however, which I can give you I shall be delighted'—

'Mona?' I asked.

'Is my loving and very obedient wife.'

'And the man who was washed ashore?'

'Is a puzzle to me too. And, by the way, with regard to him, I played my hand atrociously. I should never have identified him as my brother. It was a false card, and the police trumped it when they, very, naturally, arrested me for the murder.'

'Do you know, Mr Magrath,' said I quite honestly, 'against my own will I admire you? Your impudence is so beautifully consistent.'

'Ah!' he said, with a mock sigh; 'then I have not lived in vain. "Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley"—you know the rest.'

That was my last conversation with Robert Magrath. The murder prosecution of course fell through, and Colin would allow no other to be instituted. It was subsequently proved that the

body which was washed ashore was that of the victim of a tragedy on board one of the boats of the North Sea fishing-fleet. I have recorded the story elsewhere.

I never solved the other problem. Colin would tell me nothing; and even my little friend Dorothy, at her husband's bidding no doubt,

always managed to change the subject when I showed signs of becoming inquisitive.

After all, there are some secrets into which even the dual character of solicitor and friend of the family does not entitle one to pry. To be perfectly ingenuous, I must confess that I have not found them very numerous.

THE 'PREACHING-PITS' OF CORNWALL.



SCATTERED throughout the length and breadth of Cornwall are innumerable disused mine-shafts, as might be expected in a county whose mining industry has existed for considerably over twenty centuries. When the lodes of tin and copper gave out, or became too poor to pay for the working, the mines were abandoned, leaving either innumerable yawning chasms or shafts hundreds of fathoms deep to scar the face of the country. In time the woodwork which had been placed as a lining to the shafts to support the sides rotted away, and, as a result, the sides caved in and fell into the shaft, and so formed a pit. In many cases the 'run-in,' as this caving-in is termed, formed a perfectly circular pit in the shape of an inverted truncated cone, sometimes measuring over a hundred feet in diameter at the surface, and from thirty to forty feet in its greatest depth. Where the ground was more 'rubby' the pit would be wider and deeper.

When the great religious revival under the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield took place, Cornwall was one of the counties in which the movement took deep root. Chapels sprang up very quickly; but until these were built the revivalists looked about for places in which they might worship without molestation. Some genius saw great possibilities in these 'run-in' mine-shafts, and so the 'preaching-pit' became an accomplished fact. The bottoms of the pits were levelled, and on the sloping sides rude seats were formed by cutting the earth into tiers of steps and covering them with turf. A high bank was raised at one side for the preacher, and an opening was cut so as to give easy access to the pit. In some cases a railing was erected round the outer edge, having an entrance-gate.

In these rude, improvised amphitheatres, eminently suited to the rough, emotional nature of the Cornish miner, revival services were held, and hundreds of converts were 'brought in,' as the Cornishman terms it. With nothing but the blue sky above and the green grass below, the pit crowded tier above tier with solemn-faced religionists, listening with bated breath to the denunciation of the sinner and the exhortation to flee from wrath eternal; the young, dark-haired,

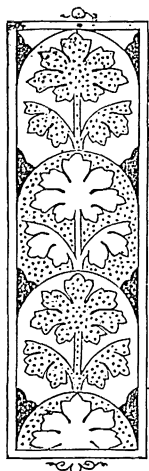
blue-eyed lads and maidens sitting hand-in-hand, as is the custom with Cornish lovers, and their elders nodding and shaking their heads as they agree or disagree with the remarks of the preacher, occasionally emitting a groan or an 'Amen;' while over all, the gathering gloom completes the solemnity of the scene, and makes it a fit subject for the brush of a Rembrandt. Then, when the hymn, rolling from a thousand throats and echoed from the pit-sides, had been sung, followed by the prayer, in which the entire spirit of the supplicant was poured forth with violent gesticulations and contortions of body, to the accompaniment of 'Amens,' groans, and 'Hallelujahs' of the believers, mingled with cries and shrieks from the 'unsaved,' it would seem as if the spirit of the ancient Druids had survived through the centuries in this remnant of Britain's ancient people.

These 'preaching-pits' are all situated in West Cornwall. That at Gwennap, near Redruth, is the largest and best known. It is forty-seven yards in diameter, and will accommodate ten thousand people. In Wesley's time it was very much larger. Others are situated at Newlyn East, near Newquay, and at Indian Queen's, near Truro. The pits are not now regularly used as places of worship; but on Bank Holidays special services are held in them, and they are used also on the occasion of a Sunday-school treat. At such times they are well worth visiting.

A SONNET.

So soft your words were when you went away,
So smooth your brow the while you said good-bye,
So deep the tranquil candour of your eye,
So calm the peace that like a halo lay
Around your head. Had you no wish to stay
A little longer with us? or a sigh,
The while the death-mist and the grave drew nigh,
To mourn the fleetness of your shortened day?

Had earth no joys wherewith to tempt you, sweet?
Was life so heavy with its weight of woe
That, in the turmoil of the market-street,
You should be weary ere the sun was low?
Was Earth so sad it could not stay your feet?
Or Heaven so fair that you were fain to go?



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SAPELLI ON THE NIGER.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS.



HERE are many malaria-haunted swamps along the West African coast; but perhaps the largest, and certainly the most important to European trade, is the waste of mire and mangroves about the Niger mouths. The number of these deltaic arms no white man exactly knows, for between the six-mile-wide rivers there stretches for nearly three hundred miles from Lekki to Opobo an interminable maze of winding creeks, some mere stagnant ditches oozing among putrid slime, and others tidal waterways through which a three-thousand-ton steamer may pass. In many places for leagues and leagues the dingy mangroves rise out of rotting mire where even the Jakkery bushman fears to set his foot; but interspersed among them lie tracts of cotton-wood forest with strips of yellow sand where the trading factories stand perched on piles about the water-side.

For some five months each year—though the duration of the seasons is uncertain—forest and swamp are alternately swept by tropical deluge and rolled in clouds of steam. Then, when the cool rush of the Harmattan which follows dies away, the whole delta lies sweltering in fervent heat, and the emanations sucked up from the rotting swamps bring sickness and death to the European who breathes them. Yet this undesirable region commands the easiest route to a vast tract of Northern Africa; the exports of the delta alone are large; and, as a natural consequence, in spite of climatic ills, there are many white men dwelling in isolated groups throughout the Niger swamps. They are representatives of the three classes who have ever done the most to extend British dominion and some measure of civilisation into the waste places of the earth—the adventurous trader, outpost officer, and the missionary; while at Sapelli the manner of their life and the work they do may be clearly seen. There are, of course, other and larger stations, including Akassa, head-

quarters of the great Chartered Company, and

Calabar, seat of the government; but one greatly resembles another, and Sapelli is perhaps the farthest outpost of the Niger Coast Protectorate, lying, as it does, on the fringe of a land which a little while ago it was death for a white man to enter.

Early one morning the writer with two companions stood on the veranda of a trader's house beside the Sapelli River. We were glad to reach the open air, for our match-boarded quarters reeked with the mingled odours of stale tobacco, kerosene oil, and rotting wood, and the mosquitoes had rendered sound sleep impossible. No one, however, is cheerful at 6 A.M. in Western Africa, where a white man wakes up wondering if he has the fever, and the prudent swallow a quinine tabloid before their early coffee, while the nervous man may be seen leaning over the veranda with a thermometer-stalk projecting from his mouth. If the mercury registers within a degree of 98 he is satisfied, while if it marks 100 that man wears an anxious face all day. There are few Europeans in the Niger delta who have not a thermometer somewhere concealed about them.

The dwelling was of the usual type, a white-washed wooden building resembling an exaggerated hen-roost, perched on piles to escape the worst of the malaria, with four bare rooms on the same floor opening into the veranda running round them. Close at hand was a similar luxurious residence, and farther away the red roofs of two others could be seen rising above the trees. Beyond a narrow clearing the great cotton-wood forest stood like a wall, the massy trunks rising two hundred feet above their buttressed roots, and creepers draping each giant limb. Beneath there flowed a swift river, clear as crystal, strange to say, and starred with floating blossom; while beyond a fringe of reeds upon the other bank the columnar stems and feathery fronds of oil-palms rose from out the tall lilies at their feet, wreaths of steam eddying among them. As usual, the air was clammy with moisture, and heavy with the smell

of steaming earth, spicy odours from the forest, and the rankness of rotting leaves. Even at that hour one felt mere breathing to be an effort, and exertion of any kind an impossibility. There is, however, little opportunity for listless indolence at a Niger trading-station; and as we shook off the lethargy, two young clerks, mere boys, whose haggard faces nevertheless bore the stamp of suffering and endurance, descended the creaking stairway, and a distant 'chunk-chunk' of paddles came down the misty river.

The sun was lifting itself, a disc of burnished copper, above the rim of the forest when we stood upon the river-bank watching a swarm of ebony-skinned Krooboy labourers from the far-off Liberian beaches straggle towards oil and gin sheds, and we knew that a flotilla of trade canoes were coming down. The coolness of the dawn is soon past in Western Africa, and the early sun-rays scorched our faces when a line of dug-out canoes swung round a bend and drove towards us, the water foaming about their bows, and the naked crews hissing as they dipped the flashing paddles and brought them up against the gun-wales with a simultaneous 'chunk.' On they slid towards the landing, unwieldy craft some thirty feet by seven, loaded to the water's edge with oil and kernels, and propelled by huge negroes with curious devices in blue tattoo standing out in relief upon their naked skin, and hair knitted up into endless plaits. In the stern of each there crouched two or three fighting-men, curved-edged matchets or long-barrelled flintlock guns glinting beside them; while upon a wattled platform of every third or fourth craft, the headman trader to whom this detachment belonged stood pompously erect. He, as a rule, was gorgeously and wonderfully arrayed in crownless silk hat, cast-off mate's uniform, or scarlet infantry tunic which refused to meet across his brawny chest, with anything from pyjamas to cavalry boots upon his naked limbs. These were the smaller traders, unsophisticated 'bushmen,' for the more important headmen generally attire themselves in duck garments of sober fashion. Then, as usual, there was trouble brewing in the swamps, and the oil-carriers knew that their only hope of bringing their goods through safely was to travel well armed together.

One of the young clerks watched the flotilla converge upon the landing, and then, with a brief 'And now the fun begins—a roaring trade to-day,' hurried towards the oil-shed. The clerk was right. There was space for only five or six canoes alongside the landing, and a score of clumsy craft were shooting towards it as fast as the whirling paddles could drive them. Now the Jakkery, like most negroes, has no idea of method and less of order. Therefore the crew of each canoe endeavoured to get their craft first alongside by the primitive means of driving her through or over all that lay between, and a scene of wild confusion followed.

The hollowed cotton-wood logs drove crashing together, the river-men howled and smote with paddle-haft or clawed at each other's throats, the smaller craft were swamped between, and miscellaneous cargo began to hurtle through the air. The headmen appeared to be anathematising each other in many tongues; while the factory agent, who had previously paid for some of the goods, and now saw them being spilt wholesale into the river, leaned over the veranda above and hurled impartial abuse at all. When the strongest had won first place, and the rest were laving what the Krooboy calls 'blue eyes,' and fishing their property out of the water, the writer and his companions hurried towards the kernel-shed in advance of a howling mob, to see the trade begin.

Here the clerk stood beside a big tub measure, or 'cooler,' hung on trunnions; and after the usual fight for precedence, the servants of each headman flung basket after basket of greasy palm-kernels, black objects half the size of a filbert, into the measure. They were all immense fellows, with arms and chests wonderfully developed by labour at the paddle, but having the weak lower limbs of the canoe-dweller. As each lot was complete, the headman received a stamped brass tally as a voucher for so many measures, and we presently moved towards the oil-shed.

There the other clerk, bathed in perspiration, was weighing sticky yellow oil. The place was already as hot as an oven, and between the sickly fragrance of the oil, the smell of raw rubber, which is one of the worst in the world, and other savours, the state of its atmosphere cannot be described. Yet this youth worked there in heat and steam twelve hours a day, suffered regularly from fever as a matter of course, and his salary was sixty pounds a year, which it will be admitted he earned.

The trade-store, or 'shop,' would not be opened yet, and the writer, having an appointment with one of the Protectorate officials who ruled that district, turned towards the lower landing.

A light and beautifully-modelled canoe, the product of the combined skill of a Liberian Krooboy and Fanti craftsman from the Gold Coast—for no Niger-man could have turned out work like that—lay alongside the bank. The writer, saluting the lieutenant of Protectorate troops and acting vice-consul, whose friendship he had gained by advice on sails and gear on an earlier visit, stepped gingerly on board; and setting the big lugsail, we slid away down the shimmering river towards a distant swamp. The reflected glare was dazzling; the starry lilies which curled over beneath the bows resembled blotches of intense brightness, while a glancing of superheated air danced over the crystal water, and the tired eyes turned thankfully towards the vistas of steamy, creeper-choked forest that opened up between the tall palms on either side.

By-and-by the scene was changed, for the dry land gave place to mangrove swamps; and, lowering the sail, we paddled into a tunnel-like opening winding away into the dim green shade. The lieutenant did not know where that creek led to, though it was fully eight feet deep, but there are thousands of unknown waterways winding through the Niger delta. The water was thick and yellow like pea-soup. On either hand the slimy mangrove tentacles rose like arches out of noisome depths of yeasty water and bubbling mire, the white stems stretching away into the distance, and olive-green foliage interlaced above.

So still and strange was the whole scene that it affected one almost like a nightmare, until it was a positive relief to come upon the handiwork of man again. A little basket-work house stood raised on piles above the mire, with strings of charms not good to look upon hung upon it, while from a wand above dangled a symbol of the Ju-Ju mystery, a bunch of reddened rags. Sapelli lies on the fringe of a region where every kind of fetich cruelty is rife, and into which, before the fall of Old Benin, few white men had ever set their foot. This house, like others which stud the Niger creeks, was erected in honour of Amalaku, the river-god, and as a resting-place for the wandering ghosts, who would otherwise—so the natives say—strangle belated oil-carriers, or smite them to death with intangible spears. They are confirmed in this superstition by the fact that occasionally a canoe, in which a strong man, upon whom no trace of violence can be found, lies dead, is occasionally met drifting down the stream. The Ju-Ju men may, nevertheless, be able to explain the mystery of the canoes. The lieutenant frowned as he passed the hut, probably because he knew that in spite of his efforts the power of the Ju-Ju is greater than that of the government in the remoter swamps; and the writer shuddered, for he had heard many ghastly tales from traders, white and black, about the worship of the river-gods.

Presently, as we threaded our way through banks of ooze where the creek widened out, the horny head and rough-barked shoulders of an alligator rose slowly out of the mire, and we knew that the chance we sought had come. Two rifles lay in the canoe, a Martini and Lee-Metford, and the writer seized the former, for he knew that if one desires to 'stop' a creature of any size, it is necessary to use the shock of a fair-sized projectile. Pitching the blue barrel forward, he dropped his cheek upon the stock, and squeezed the trigger just as the last of the horny scales disappeared into the slime that sucked about them. There was a jarring crash, and almost simultaneously with the thin, shrill ringing of the Lee-Metford he heard the thud of the Martini bullet crunching through the bone. There is no mistaking this sound; and as to alligator scales turning a ball at close range, the

idea is out of date in these days of high explosives. We saw an alligator drilled through back and side at full eighty yards, from Warri river-bank, by a Martini bullet, and a Lee-Metford would perforate a row. There was a great splashing ahead, and then something floundered away amid churned-up mud into the mangroves, and the writer felt half-inclined to scramble across the matted roots in chase, but the lieutenant knew better. As he pointed out, one slip would be sufficient, for no swimmer could escape from the grasp of that plastic mire, and we left the stricken beast alone. Afterwards we ate our lunch in a little steaming basin, and then paddled back towards the river to wait for the launch which was to call and tow us back.

It was late in the afternoon and fiercely hot when the writer joined his companions in the factory compound again, and witnessed scenes very similar to that which he has already described in 'An Incident of the Niger Trade,' *Chambers's Journal*, February 4, 1899.

A little of that experience goes a very long way, so we elbowed a passage to the door and strolled towards the gin-shed, one of the party gasping for breath, which was hardly to be wondered at. The doors of the galvanised shed were wide open, and a line of naked negroes, and probably slaves, were carrying down the green gincases upon their heads, while the youth who had officiated over the 'cooler' kept a careful list of all, the goods being delivered on account of oil to follow.

This gin, which is one of the staple imports of Western Africa, costs twopence-halfpenny or less per quart wholesale, is made in Germany from potatoes, and, judging from the effect it has upon a rash white man, might be fortified with vitriol. Lagos alone takes millions of cases, and immense quantities are unloaded at Akassa and New Benin. There is no doubt that to the European at least the stuff is deadly, for the writer has a vivid recollection of more than once seeing a seaman, who had purchased it surreptitiously ashore, brought back to his steamer, not intoxicated, but raving mad. Nevertheless, the effect it may have upon the negro—who will take a bottle of black draught for a dose, and smilingly ask the surgeon for more croton-oil—is probably not very much.

The young white clerk, who had been weakened by fever, seemed almost in a state of collapse; but, as he said, there was no one else to do the work, and, ill or well, he must keep tally of those cases until darkness fell.

Sapelli has not the large salt-trade to be found at Akassa and New Benin, though some is sold; but from the whole delta thousands of bags of Cheshire salt go inland, across wide lagoons and up leagues of yellow river. Then the white crystals are packed in fibre cylinders, and carried on the heads of slave-gangs through the steamy forests, each sable potentate cutting off an inch

in return for the doubtful privilege of passing through his dominions, until at last the Arab bears the remnant, which is worth its weight in silver and has cost many human lives, eastwards towards the Nile and north towards Algiers on his camel-trains. In Africa, as elsewhere in the older world, distance is not considered. After the burning of a small stockade upon the Niger, and in several battles with Soudanese raiders in Senegal, beautifully damascened twist guns and finely-tempered swords were found, apparently the work of Indian or Persian artificers. How they crossed endless leagues of scorching desert and forest, or by what route they came, no white man knows; but the Arab trader could doubtless explain, for his commerce extends very far across the little-known regions of the earth, and in much of Africa his dominion and influence are supreme.

Europeans have settled upon the West African coast for four hundred years and more. Government official and missionary have done all that in them lay, and yet in the Niger swamps the Jakkery lives as he did from the beginning, and the negro of the seaboard is still, generally speaking, an ignorant savage. On the other hand, where the older civilisation of the East, even though it be debased by superstition and incorporated tradition, has touched the negro, a change is at once apparent. The Moslem and semi-Moslem nations of the hinterland are generally people of high intelligence, dwelling in strong-walled towns, tilling the ground, practising industrial arts, and organised into military nations instead of hording in rickety clusters of huts, a mere rabble of cut-throat tribes. It is from these alone that every soldier and trusted government servant is drawn; but the influence of Islam in Africa is a subject which cannot be treated here.

Later, having permission from our canoeing friend, we rowed off to the government hulk, *Hindoostan*, headquarters of the two Protectorate officials then ruling that district, for it was a 'justice-palaver day.' Descending to what had once been gun-deck, and was now courtroom, we settled ourselves to see and listen, and the surroundings were striking. The courtroom was, of course, stiflingly hot; through the wide ports a lace-like tracery of green palm-fronds could be seen rising against the crystalline blueness, while the reflected glare of the river shimmered through steam upon bulkhead and beam. A crowd of oily, perspiring negroes filled the place, some ironed and awaiting trial, and others crouching moodily still until the suit they had brought to be decided according to the justice of the white men should be heard, while a few big Yorubas stood grimly on guard, with rifles in their hands. Here, also, the air was almost unbreathable; moisture trickled down the boards, and the deck-beams sweated splashing globules from overhead. It is characteristic of Western Africa that even on a

day of fervent heat everything reeks with damp, the clamminess increasing with the temperature.

Upon a dais our friend and his companion sat like statues, the one leaning forward with the perspiration trickling from his hair upon the hand which supported his aching head, while the other sat upright, listening wearily while a Jakkery interpreter rendered the story of a native witness into fantastic English—this case was adjourned for further evidence. Then we heard one man sentenced to three months' useful labour making roads—the punishment he dreaded most—for firing at an oil-canoe; and another story pointing to fetich murders; and finally one of our party whose nerve had given way before turned very white. We helped him up on deck, sick and faint, and spasmodically abusive of all things African, and lounged beneath the awnings until, when the court was cleared, we bade the officials farewell. One of them smiled when he inquired if the would-be trader had recovered, and hinted that he would encounter many more trying things than that; while the other, struggling against a shivering fit, nodded grim approval. And so we rowed away, and the writer never saw either of the kindly pair again—for both were distinguished by the courtesy which almost invariably marks the Protectorate official. One still does good work among the Niger swamps, at another station now, and the other sleeps his last sleep beside a misty African river.

When darkness closed down suddenly upon river and forest, at about six o'clock, we dined with the factory people on skinny fowls and palm-oil chop, a spicy compound of fowl and fish, mangoes and yams, all swimming in thick yellow oil, with preserved fruit in cans. It is strange to be given canned pine-apple as a treat while finer ones grow abundantly at hand, but on the West Coast fresh pine-apple is said to be a dangerous thing to eat.

Later, the moon rose up above the palms, and we lounged upon the wide veranda, watching the woolly fever-mist creep forth from the forest across the shimmering river, and the fireflies flashing among the night-flowering lilies below. Beneath us the Krooboys crouched about their dying fires, wreaths of blue vapour curled across the palms, and the occasional croon of a Liberian chanty or the monotonous tapping of a monkey-skin drum came sharply through the stillness. Then, as the last red glow flickered out and the weird music ceased, we bade our hosts farewell, and departed in a canoe towards our steamer, lying farther down the creek. And so the visit to Sapelli came to an end.

[Since this article was written, by the passing of the Royal Niger Company Bill, the former Crown colony of Lagos, the Niger Coast Protectorate, and the Royal Niger Companies Territories are destined to become one large colonial area, under the three governments of Lagos, Southern Nigeria, and Northern Nigeria.]

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER IX.—CONCLUSION.



HE Chevalier was within a few yards of us, having apparently come from an open door to our right, and, like Kennett, was booted and cloaked for riding. If he had overheard our discussion, as he must certainly have done in part, there was no sign of it on his placid countenance. But he seemed to me to have grown older and more careworn since my last view of him, while his expression was that of a man who had suddenly lost all hope, and had not yet resigned himself to his lot.

For a minute Kennett was too greatly taken aback to answer. Charles Edward drew a little nearer, regarding me keenly.

'Who is this gentleman?' he repeated, and for the first time I noticed that his tongue had the slightest taint of a foreign accent.

'His name is Holroyd,' said Kennett almost roughly, 'and he is an underling of the Secretary of State.'

The statement, that might have meant so much to him, had no visible effect. 'Of Lord Kynaston?' he asked, bowing courteously. 'You have a message from him to me, sir?'

I had made up my mind what attitude to adopt towards him, and so replied with the respect due to his birth, but otherwise simply as one gentleman speaking to another. 'Twas for him to decide if he were to remain incognito.

'The message is from my cousin, Sir Charles Hollingworth, who is lying mortally wounded at the Dower-house,' said I, and gave it word for word, omitting only the phrase that reflected upon Kennett's discretion.

To do the Prince justice, his first thoughts were rather of Sir Charles than himself.

'There is no hope for him?' he inquired.

'I fear not, sir.'

'I am deeply grieved,' he said, more moved than, from his reputation, I should have expected.

'One after another,' he went on, half to himself. 'What unhappy fate is it that dooms my best friends to lose their lives in my cause?' Then, after a moment's deliberation, he turned to his follower. 'Sir Charles is right,' said he quietly; 'and there is nothing for it but to obey him. Will you see to the change in our plans, Mr Kennett?'

But Kennett, who was manifestly not too well pleased by his decision, demurred. 'If your Royal Highness will permit me a word in your ear'—

Stepping aside, they conferred together in a whisper, and Kennett appeared to be urging some scheme that was unpalatable to the other—probably one with which my coming had interfered,

although I could not guess, and never discovered, what their intention had been. At last the Prince's voice rose somewhat.

'No, no—a thousand times no!' he cried. 'We should only drag others to ruin and death—like Hollingworth. And for what? Let us drop the mask. I have seen it myself since I came here—that success is hopeless. The cause is lost, and we cannot fight against destiny. . . . Say no more, my friend. I have had it in my mind all day, and now I am fully determined.'

'There is still my objection,' persisted Kennett as they turned again towards me.

'As to that, Mr Holroyd may advise us.' To me: 'Mr Kennett would like to have an assurance that, in following Sir Charles's advice, we shall not be molested by the Government.'

'While I have no claim to speak officially,' said I, 'I feel sure that you will meet with no hindrance.'

'Not even from Kynaston's cordon?' asked Kennett. 'What warrant have we that they will not stop us?'

'Lord Kynaston has not consulted me in this matter, and so I am not aware of his instructions. But I think it hardly likely that his men will stop Mr Kennett and his friend, riding openly.'

'And, in any case, we must run certain risks,' said the Prince in a tone that precluded further debate. Then he addressed me in his most gracious manner. 'I have to thank you for a notable service, sir,' said he, 'and to beg that you will lay me under still another obligation. Will you take my answer to Sir Charles, if it is not unhappily too late? Pray tell him that his last request must be sacred to me, and that his Prince will never cease to cherish the memory of the bravest and most loyal of his friends. And if all is over, will you tell Miss Kitty that her grief is very near to the heart of one who has not too many friends to lose?'

There are few faults with which the world has not credited Charles Edward Stuart, but in this case one could not doubt his perfect sincerity; and I cannot believe that a man who could so feel for another at a crisis of his own life was altogether bad.

'Will you let me thank you again, Mr Holroyd?' he added when I had bowed my acquiescence. 'Under another star it might have been my good fortune to be as well served by you as my kinsman is.'

Therewith he proffered me his hand, and—well—I am not ashamed to admit that, Whig as I was, I raised it to my lips. Let the action stand, if it please you, for a token of sympathy with fallen greatness! 'Twas the only interview

I have ever had with the last of the Stuarts, and I went from it with an abiding impression of the charm and princely dignity that he had shown under most untoward circumstances.

I was not yet free to return to the Dower-house. Kennett accompanied me from his door to the border of the park, and there pulled up.

'A minute, Mr Holroyd!' he said; and then, abruptly, 'What of Miss Hollingworth?'

'Well, what of her?' I asked, on my guard.

'Have any arrangements been made regarding her in the event of her father's death?'

Certainly one could not complain of his lack of directness. His right to inquire was more open to question.

'Surely that is a matter for her relations?' said I.

'Meaning yourself?'

'As one of them.'

'But a friend may be allowed to ask? And I have reasons. You may be aware that I am a suitor for Miss Kitty's hand'—

'With Sir Charles's sanction?' I put in rather anxiously; for the fact, albeit not unsuspected, was not quite to my liking.

'Not precisely,' he admitted, in some confusion. 'I had intended speaking to him for some days past, but the late business prevented me; and that being so'—

'Oh! it need be no secret that by Sir Charles's wish she will make her home with my mother henceforth.'

'With your mother?' He whistled ruefully. 'And I must see the Prince safely abroad, while, I suppose, you will be under the same roof with her. You'll admit 'tis hard luck for me, Mr Holroyd! . . . Well, remember that my claim stands. If you had a whole shoulder I should like to make it good here and now!'

I could not pretend to misunderstand him, and had even a feeling of admiration for his honesty.

'Are we not forgetting the person chiefly concerned in all this?' I asked him. 'The decision must rest with Kitty herself; and, for us, we have our pretext already. And, if you care, I can promise you that my mother's door in London will be open to you, and, whether you come to see my cousin or to demand the fulfilment of our engagement, you will always be anything but "cursedly unwelcome!"'

'You mean it?' he cried.

'Assuredly I do.'

'Then, some day soon, I will avail myself of the permission,' said he, gripping my hand.

So we parted—for good. For, after all, he never came to London. Long afterwards, when I had the best of all right to know, I learnt the reason from Kitty. He had written to her a few weeks later, and her answer had been so decisive that he had immediately joined the Prince abroad. He died there of a Roman fever many years ago.

As I entered the room the broken murmur of Sir Charles's voice told me that he was in a delirium. Mrs Herbert was quietly weeping; Kitty sat, pale and dry-eyed, with his hand in hers. Motioning me forward, she made room for me by her side. We did not speak, for the shadow of that which was now so near was upon us.

The minutes ticked out from a clock on the mantelshelf, and the weak voice ran on unceasingly. Through all the tangle of inconsequence, 'twas to the old Yorkshire days that the feverish brain recurred again and again, and the names of wife and daughter were never long absent from his tongue. Towards the end, however, there was a change. His mind seemed to rest at the last battle in which the fortunes of the Stuarts had been staked. Now it wandered little, and I could almost see the fatal field of Culloden as the dying Jacobite fought it out in detail, and could feel his cry of despair as the hopes of his party were scattered for ever by the breaking of the Highland ranks.

'The right is broken—tell Murray to bring up the Macdonalds, or the day is lost! . . . On them, Keppoch! There is still a chance, if—My God! the cowards are retreating! . . . The horse! Why does the Prince not charge? . . . All over? No, by heaven! . . . Get the Prince away, Sheridan—quick! quick! here are the dragoons—he must not be captured. Then for one more blow, for the old cause!'

And at that, with a great effort, he raised himself from his pillows, and his voice rang out with a marvellous strength and clarity in this shout:

'God save King James!'

Then the dominant note of his busy and varied life was still uppermost at the last; and, with a rush of blood from his mouth, he fell back. Kitty flung herself on the bed in an uncontrollable outburst of sobbing, and I passed gently out and left the women with their dead.

Lord Kynaston was awaiting me in the hall. He was ready to depart, but at sight of my face drew me into the parlour.

'So it is over?' said he.

'He died a minute ago.'

'Well, 'tis the ending of an old tale. I am a good hater; but, do you know, George, I am almost sorry for that thrust. Peace to his soul!' He mused for a moment or two, and then: 'You will stay here until everything is done, I suppose?'

'If I may.'

'Why, of course! And the daughter?'

'She and Mrs Herbert will go to my mother's—for the present,' said I, not quite ingenuously.

He seemed to understand, and patted me kindly on the arm. 'That is the proper course, my boy,' said he. 'Miss Kitty will never forgive me: 'tis a woman's privilege. But, for me, I can

have no feud with the daughter of Marjorie Clifford. When the time comes to petition for the restoration of the Hollingworth estates—and it need not be long—you may take it that my influence will not be exerted against her.’

‘I thanked him, and, in truth, was well convinced (as events proved) that ’twould be all-powerful on the other side. Then, as in duty bound, I mentioned my visit to Langbridge.

‘Ah! I was told of that,’ he replied.

‘I went with a message from Sir Charles to Kennett and a guest of his,’ I continued. ‘They are starting to-night for foreign parts, and I ventured to assure them that, as far as I knew, no warrant was out to hinder them.’

‘Without authority—eh?’ he asked, his eyes twinkling. ‘As it happens, however, you are right. If I had wanted this mysterious guest of Mr Kennett’s, I could have had him days ago. It suits my purpose better to let him go, and welcome! He is useless for further evil, and, in the present state of affairs, we have no wish to excite the public mind by stories of Jacobite plotting—especially, as in this case,’ he added, ‘when it has come to nothing.’

‘Thanks to you, my lord,’ said I.

He smiled. ‘And thanks partly to the excellent information that I got from a traitor in their camp,’ he replied. ‘No, you have not his acquaintance; and, as he may be of still further service, I have no intention that you should.’

And the plot itself? As I gathered later, ’twas indeed a crack-brained and desperate scheme. It depended on the expected decease of the King, and had for objects the kidnapping of

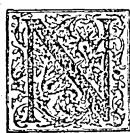
the Prince of Wales and a revolt in the western and Welsh counties, where Jacobite principles were fondly imagined to be supreme. You know how it was strangled, but not before the Chevalier had been brought over to be in readiness, and many meetings held betwixt the returned exiles and their English sympathisers. My lord had bided his time, and at the proper moment had found means to inform the conspirators of his knowledge, and of the steps he meant to take on the morrow. This was on the evening of my arrival at Bath, and perhaps Kennett had just heard the news when I met him in the Pump-room. His attempt on my liberty may be explained by a doubt whether my lord was yet aware of the Prince’s presence, and the desire to prevent me from speaking until he was in safety. For the rest, the hint had amply sufficed: the plotters had scattered at once. The subsequent doings of my chief, and his motives therefor, have already been explained by himself.

‘And now, George, I must get on to Devizes,’ he said after some more talk. ‘I could not remain here, of course—even if the scratches had been more serious. With only a prick on the arm, and a grazing of the skin above my ribs, I have no excuse.’

I said good-bye to him at the foot of the avenue, and then turned back—to Kitty. She had need of me; and an intoxicating hope was springing in my heart that—perhaps not yet, but assuredly at some future time—it might be my happy lot to dry her tears.

THE END.

OUR MEAT-SUPPLY.



NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts of ultra-humanitarians and other advocates of vegetarianism, it is practically certain that meat will remain, as it has ever been, the chief article of human diet; and as the home supply does not keep pace with the demands of an ever-increasing population, it is probable that the imports to the United Kingdom of frozen meat will in the near future considerably increase.

The idea of preserving meat for future consumption is, of course, of very ancient origin; and various methods have in past times been adopted. The oldest and most primitive way was by drying, a process which is still extensively employed in hot countries. The next step was the use of antiseptics, such as salt, sugar, and vinegar. To come to more modern times, we have the various methods of preservation dependent on the exclusion of air, out of which sprang the tinned and potted meat trades, which have now reached such huge dimensions in America. But this is appli-

cable to cooked food only, and the two first methods to which we have alluded considerably lessen the nutritive value of the meat. Hence it was not until the invention, in comparatively recent years, of the cold-air chamber that a satisfactory method was discovered of preserving meat for lengthy periods in its original fresh state. That cold to a great degree prevents putrefaction has been common knowledge for centuries; but ice in its natural state can, of course, only be used for comparatively brief periods. The modern cold-air chamber first took shape in the late seventies, meat having become very dear in this country owing to the cattle-plague. Previously to this, the cold-air chamber had been employed in bringing meat to Europe from America; but the method of cooling the chamber was more primitive, ice being the main factor. The first importation of Australian preserved meat on record was in the year 1865, when a small quantity was brought over by a Mr John McCall. About 1875 ice began to be largely employed in connection

with the importation of meat from America, and in 1877 the total quantity of foreign meat received in the country amounted to 599,181 cwt.

It was in the following year that the introduction of the Bell-Coleman chamber—the air passed through which was for the first time cooled by compression—successfully solved the problem, and laid the foundation of a trade which has now reached enormous dimensions. Since 1879, by means of the Bell-Coleman, and later of the Haslam method, fresh meat has regularly been imported from America, the quantity to hand during 1898 being 65,872 quarters of beef and 2,340,442 carcasses of lamb and mutton. A carcass averages 56 lb.

Australia entered the trade in 1880, and the number of carcasses of mutton and lamb received from this source rapidly expanded from 13,771 in 1881 to 55,087 the succeeding year, and 1,263,422 in 1898. The beef imported last year from this colony amounted to 357,615 quarters. The first cargo successfully brought from New Zealand was in 1882, when the sailing-ship *Dunedin* delivered 4909 carcasses of sheep and 22 pigs, all in perfect condition, in spite of the exceptional heat experienced during the voyage, which occupied very nearly three months. The imports of mutton and lamb from New Zealand to this country during the year 1898 totalled considerably over two and three-quarter million carcasses, the beef to hand from the same source being 51,799 quarters.

River Plate made its first appearance as a meat-exporter in 1884, when 108,823 carcasses of frozen mutton and lamb were landed in this country. For the twelve months ended 31st December last, over two and a quarter million carcasses of Argentine mutton and lamb were received, together with 65,872 quarters of beef.

Some idea of the magnitude of the trade can be gathered from the fact that London alone possesses at the present time frozen meat stores with accommodation for 1,324,000 carcasses, while distributed over the remainder of Great Britain and Ireland there is storage capacity for 1,784,000 carcasses. Glasgow, in respect of a population of 715,000, has two stores, with a total capacity for 120,000 carcasses. It is noteworthy that Edinburgh, with its population of 293,000, had no cold meat storage accommodation until the present year. In all, there are in the United Kingdom sixty stores. Through these there passed last year over 475,300 quarters of beef, nearly 5,190,000 carcasses of mutton, and over one and a quarter million carcasses of lamb.

In transporting this vast quantity of meat from the producer to the consumer some one hundred and thirty steamships, fitted with the necessary refrigerating machinery, were engaged. The aggregate of close upon six and a half million frozen sheep and lambs imported into this country during

1898 contrasts with considerably under four million carcasses in 1893, less than two and a quarter million carcasses in 1883, and 400 carcasses in 1880. Expressed in hundredweights, our total imports of mutton and lamb in 1898 amounted to 3,314,003, compared with 3,193,276 the previous year, and 2,895,158 in 1896.

That this growth in the quantity of foreign meat delivered in this country has not had a greater effect on the prices charged by the retail butcher than has been the case is due to two reasons. Firstly, it must be borne in mind that the increase in the supply of meat has also been accompanied by an expansion in the demand. Since 1890 (and to go back to an earlier period would still further strengthen the argument) there has been, according to official figures, an expansion in the population of the United Kingdom of close upon three millions. This represents an increase in the eight years of nearly 8·75 per cent. Meanwhile there has been practically no alteration in the number of live cattle annually imported. The supplies of live sheep to hand have, it is true, slightly expanded; but a meat famine must inevitably have occurred had it not been for the frozen meat trade. The second reason why the progress of the trade has not been proportionately reflected in the price charged to the meat-consumer is that there exists, although, perhaps, not to quite the same extent as formerly, an unaccountable prejudice among the well-to-do classes against frozen meat. 'I must have English meat,' says the average individual of the upper and upper-middle classes; and although it is to be feared that his butcher is sometimes more human than honest, and sells his customer foreign meat, merely adding a few pence per pound to the price to satisfy that customer's prejudice, yet the effect is apparent in the comparatively small fluctuation experienced in the price of home-killed meat and in the margin between the two descriptions. We advisedly allude to the prejudice against foreign meat as unaccountable, for it has been proved beyond a doubt that frozen meat is, from the point of view both of nourishment and easy digestion, in all degrees equal to fresh meat killed in this country. The freezing process which foreign meat undergoes for the purposes of export in no way detracts from its nutritive value; and, indeed, the difference between frozen and home-killed meat of the same quality is perceptible only to the epicure or the expert.

Already, however, our imports of foreign mutton and lamb equal approximately 18,000 carcasses per day, or 32 per cent. of the total supply from all quarters; and as popular prejudice disappears beneath the proofs of modern science, it is probable that this rate will continue to expand, to the mutual benefit of the home consumer and the colonial producer.

A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.



WANG continued to play with rare prudence and skill. At the same time, each night exhibited an increase in his pallor and emaciation. He was eating very little, and I doubt if he slept well. He was beginning to feel the difference between an 18-line and a 19-line board, and was confused by the multiplicity of pieces; and probably his sleep was but a nightmare of *wei-ch'i*, which served him in lieu of practice, as opium serves one in lieu of imagination, at the expense of facility. Ho, on the contrary, was now perfectly in his element, with two hundred odd pieces on the board, and a complicated permutation of intricacies which warmed his generalship. He began to play much quicker than Wang, who required an hour for consideration, and yet was afraid of trying the patience of his adversary. They made about half-a-dozen moves a night. Ta Yüeh was growing anxious, and his ferrety eyes cast menacing looks at Wang's downcast face. His favour had not been propitiated by the news that Wang's brothers had been forewarned, and had escaped.

The examination of the prisoners had meanwhile been concluded, and resulted in a clear verdict of open treason. The finding had been sent to Peking, and the execution of the men was only a question of a few weeks. But the case of Wang, as ringleader, had been postponed, since it was necessary to secure further evidence about him. The Chik-fu fluently assured him that he was quite safe, having no intention of losing the Kung board for want of a lie. Ho said nothing, but played impenetrably.

Every night, at close of play, the General pressed the suspended air-ball which photographed the board. Ta had been greatly troubled over this mystery; and Ho, at my suggestion, explained that it was a magnetic device of the foreigners which kept the 'men' in their places. He pinched it again on commencing play, and said that this removed the magnetic current. Every morning I developed the film, and the General compared results.

The game had at last come to a critical stage. Every move almost was accompanied by the words '*Chik ni*' or '*Yao chik*' ('I eat you'), which is equivalent to 'check' in chess, and which betokened that a space or a detached body of the enemy was surrounded and 'eaten up.' I could no longer pretend to follow the game myself, with two hundred and fifty men or more dotted all over the board; but I could see that it was not going too well with Wang. On the other hand, the General was suffering from intense anxiety, with difficulty masked behind his impenetrable coldness.

The truth was that, although he was eating up Wang's small detachments at every move, Wang had so admirably planned his game that the General needed all his ability to avoid or stave off a single large capture which would more than counterbalance all his minor successes. Wang was, in chess parlance, sacrificing pieces for the 'mate,' while Ho was constantly 'checking.' Being a lover of good chess, and having a 'bowing acquaintance' with *wei-ch'i*, I saw enough of Wang's game to feel an intense admiration for the poor fellow's nerve, courage, and concentration, in face of the awful stake hanging over him.

But when play ceased for the night, appearances, as I say, were against Wang. His position was excellent; but lack of practice on the full-sized board bewildered him, and it was becoming apparent that he could no longer keep a grasp on his own strategy. Once or twice he missed his opportunity; he forgot what he was playing for, and in his despair neglected his tactics to encounter those of his adversary. There was a triumphant glitter in the General's eye, and privately I prayed that he might win. I did not fear that he would be treacherous to an honourable conqueror, but I felt sure he would be generous to a vanquished opponent who had fought so well. He was playing to win, and no one could accuse Wang of playing to lose. Besides, if Wang lost, the General would preserve his board and his one hundred taels. Most assuredly he would find a means of preserving Wang's life in exchange.

The next day Wang finished the firing of his plaque. It was a perfect imitation. Only a microscopic examination of the writing on the squares would have shown a slight difference in the characters and here and there a fresher darkness of the ink. The same day, unknown to Wang and to myself, his two brothers were arrested and examined by the Chik-fu. The General was present at the inquiry, as usual. When the men declared their entire ignorance of their brother's conspiracy, the Chik-fu turned to the General, the General sternly nodded, and they were thumb-screwed. There would be no more manipulation of pottery for these poor mechanics for many a day. Under the torture they 'confessed'; that is to say, they racked their imagination to invent some revelations, and eagerly agreed to insinuating questions. To tell the truth, these brothers were not entirely worthy of Wang. They were simple and innocent enough in their way; but they were selfish and envious. When they found that the only result of their obeying Wang's appeal for their presence was that they were tortured, they were even vin-

dictively eager to incriminate him. This behaviour, I must say at once, is quite unusual in Chinamen; they are very loyal under the torture. But these men were not Wang's accomplices; and Wang had always been despised by his family for educating himself and for entering a foreigner's service.

On entering the cabinet that night the Chik-fu was particularly urbane to Wang. He assured him that he had that day obtained evidence which entirely exonerated him. His affability was, I presume, designed to put Wang in a good state of mind for the final bout. The General was irritable and cold. I don't suppose that he felt remorse for his own cruelty or his colleague's deceitfulness; but I think the proceedings of the day had made him impatient of feigning grace towards a prisoner. He sat down with a stern, set face and looked at the board. He instantly pressed the Kodak bulb, and looked sharply and suspiciously at Wang, and then at the Fu, and at me. He asked me for the previous night's photograph, and I gave it him; he glanced at it, and crushed it in his hand. There was something ominous in the air. Was it possible that Wang had tampered with the board?

It was Wang's move. He seemed puzzled and indecisive, and the General watched him relentlessly. Once or twice Wang took up a piece from the diminished pile at his side, and put it down again. The game, I think I have explained, is played by placing a piece on any vacant point you like on the board. The pieces are not moved from point to point.

Wang looked up, and shrank a little on encountering the cold, stern, suspicious eye of his opponent. 'Will your excellency forgive me if I am slow?' he asked pathetically. 'It is the first time I have played on a full board, and the number of pieces bewilder me. I forget where I was last night.'

'Take your time, Wang Lai-chee,' the General replied sternly. 'It shall not be said that Ho Tsui-fang has played unfairly even against a cheat; I am not surprised that you forget where you were.'

I was horror-struck at these words; they were obviously an accusation, and contradicted themselves, being distinctly intimidating. But Wang did not seem to take them as unusual. The expression which I have translated 'cheat' might equally be applied to him merely as a conspirator and rebel; and he took it with patient humility. On the other hand, if the board had been tampered with, his hesitation might equally be interpreted as guile.

At last Wang looked up with a strange light in his eyes. 'I think it must be your excellency's move,' he said gently; 'I do not remember'—

The Fu interposed noisily. 'No, no,' he said impatiently; 'your move, Wang *hsien-sheng*; your move. You have the game in your hands if you play carefully.'

Wang coloured painfully at the hollow courtesy

of the literate's title, for the first time given him by a mandarin.

'Wang Lai-chee,' said the General, 'it is your move. See that you do your best, or else I shall strike you in the face for a trickster.'

Wang returned his glance steadily, proudly, defiantly. Then he put down a checker, and said, '*Chik ni*.'

Ni means 'you,' and can be addressed by an equal to an equal. But it was audacity and defiance from a prisoner to a mandarin, although it is the usual expression in the game.

The move that Wang had made was victory. There still remained some vacant spots and spare pieces, but not enough to retrieve the General's loss. Wang's move, I learnt afterwards, was a masterpiece such as has seldom occurred in known games. It unexpectedly completed the enclosure of a large space of the board, already held in position by eight of the General's men. It gave Wang nine points, which could not be retrieved. It made him five points ahead, and his other positions were so good that there was not room for the General to make up this number even if he played alone.

The General pushed back his chair and called for his pipe, his hard eyes angry and inexorable. 'You have won,' he said. 'You were foolish to cheat, for you are a good player.'

'Cheat? I have not cheated!' Wang replied hotly, but in pitiable confusion.

'Go,' said the General, pointing sternly to the door which led to Wang's prison. 'Your money shall be paid to you.'

'My dear friend,' said Ta Yüeh, smiling, 'this is not like you. But you are not used to being beaten. I think it is a little hard on the poor man—is it not?—to deprive him of the last satisfaction he is likely to enjoy in the world. Why did you accuse him of cheating?'

'An extra piece had been placed on the board, *Ta lao-yeh*,' the General replied coldly. 'I had been watching this strategy'—he pointed to Wang's masterly *coup* in the centre of the board—'and I was aware of my danger. But I made note that two moves were required to complete the environment; I am sure of it, for I remember casting up the risks and deciding that I could postpone my counter-move for to-night. I do not say I could have stopped it; as you may observe, he had me here also, and it was a choice of evils. When we left off last night I was fairly beaten in positions; but war and *wei-ch'i*, as you know, often depend for the finish on moral qualities which rise superior to position. I admit that your champion has out-manceuvred me; I had made up my mind in any case to treat him as the winner. But I was looking forward for this night's play to prove that courage and a cool head can retrieve an inferiority in skill. The very fact that this Wang should have had recourse to fraud proves my contention. He had lost his head and was not sure of himself.

He would have won by one point in any case; now, as you see, if we had played to the finish, he could not fail to win by fifteen points.'

'But, my dear General, how is it possible that he should make a move unknown to you? Is he not your prisoner? Do you not keep the door locked, as well as employ foreign witchcraft to protect you? I am afraid, my dear friend, that people would say you regretted your wager.'

'The wager shall be paid, *Ta lao-yeh*. I will sign the document of transfer and deliver the board after the trial.'

Even while we were talking a messenger entered bearing despatches from Peking. After a proper obeisance before the imperial envelope, the silk was broken and the despatch opened. The General read it, and then passed it to *Ta*. The *Chik-fu* repeated the obeisance and read the edict.

'When the emperor speaks the private conscience is silent,' he said mysteriously.

The despatch was an order for the instant execution of all the accused. The *Sze-chuan* rebels had murdered a missionary, and foreign pressure called for instant proof that the Government was capable of controlling its own subjects. The *Nu-chang* mandarins were called upon to make an example in the presence of the foreign consuls of Hankow.

Wang was recalled, and informed that circumstances rendered it impossible to pardon him. His brothers had given evidence against him which confirmed his guilt.

'You have, however, nothing to regret,' the General said gravely. 'In consideration of your difficulties, I shall overlook the fact that you made two successive moves. I shall also pardon your foreign friend, my friend *Mr Kê*, who undoubtedly made the fraudulent move for you, he alone having access to the room during the day. Your victory will be duly published, and even reported to Peking, for I myself shall need exculpation for playing with a rebel. Doubtless you will receive a posthumous pardon. The hundred taels will be paid to your wife. Farewell, Wang *Lai-chee*!'

Poor Wang was thunder-struck. His eyes closed, and he sank on his knees and forehead. In a European you would have said he had fainted, but Chinese cannot faint from mental shocks, being deficient in nerves. 'Grace, *ta ren-ren*,' he murmured. 'Grant me the night to draw up a memorial myself.'

'It is granted,' *Ho* replied. 'Work to-night, for in the morning your brains will be busy.' This is a ghastly euphemism for decapitation. Wang withdrew.

Chinese justice proceeds with gruesome speed when once an imperial edict is issued. *Ho* and *Ta* retired to their respective offices and set their *shupans* at work. Before daylight *weiguans* were despatched to the consuls over the river informing them that the rebels guilty of the death of a

missionary had been caught and would be executed at sunrise, and that their excellencies were requested to be present, in order to inform their respective Governments that justice had been done.

Twenty-three of the prisoners were carried out to the execution-ground in baskets. Most of them were unable to walk, owing to the examinations they had undergone during the month since their capture. The women-folk of several were present, with the usual cups of opium-tea, which they put to the lips of their relatives—a merciful permission, exactly similar to the cup of hemlock of the Greeks. Wang, like Socrates, refused it; instead, he was allowed to stand erect, and he addressed a very touching, dignified speech of consolation to his accomplices, which they greeted with curses and revilings. His limbs, however, refused to support him in the procession to the death-place, and he was placed in a hired chair. The poor fellow was not of the stuff which can face the physical horror of death, although morally the most courageous of reformers. When the culprits, in their baskets, were arranged in a row, each so pinioned that his neck was forcibly bowed, without the use of a block, Wang lifted his head and uttered a wild and terrified appeal, asking that his petition should be read. The General, who was seated under a pavilion in his official robes, mandarin-hat with slanting plume, military plaque on breast, and top-boots of black satin, looked on him steadily, impassively, a figure of cold justice, and answered nothing. The French and Russian consuls were alone present, having, I suppose, instructions from their principals at Peking to this effect. Wang was at the end of the line. The executioner moved along, lopping off the bowed heads with his heavy sword. When he came to the end Wang was lying prone on the ground, already dead, I hope; for, as they could not raise him, the tired executioner made a sad hash of it.

So much for Wang, then. I don't know what moral I can draw from his bad luck, unless it is that you should never leave a thing half-done. It is very certain that if he had known the 19-line board as well as the 18-line, he would have at once detected the infinitesimal difference made by the addition of one pawn, and have refused to play until the game had been readjusted. I am convinced that the unauthorised move was responsible for his death.

And now I must tell you who made this unauthorised move. On developing my negatives later in the morning, I found two on the revolving film instead of one. The second represented a blurred head, out of focus, and a long-nailed hand extended over the board, holding a black piece. On the thumb of the hand was a scent-ring—a thick cylinder of hardened paste worn by fops. *Ta Yüeh*, the *Chik-fu*, wore such a ring. He had evidently pressed the bulb, believing *Ho's*

statement that without this precaution something mysterious would happen. Consequently he had photographed himself in the act of cheating. He had been afraid of losing his wager, and had 'assisted' Wang.

As soon as I could obtain an audience of Ho, who was ill-disposed to me now, I showed him the photograph, in order to exonerate myself and Wang's memory. He was interested. 'This is useful,' he said. 'I do not think it will be necessary to part with the Kung board after all.' He made no allusion to Wang whatever. He was not in the habit of remembering dead rebels.

During the afternoon the Chik-fu called, bringing with him the jade board. He was enjoying very delightful anticipations of his bargain, which he disguised by bemoaning the necessity of parting with his jade. It is customary in parting with historic heirlooms to hand the purchaser a document of the nature of a guarantee. Ho gravely laid such a document before Ta, who read it keenly, and expressed himself satisfied, laying it down on the table while he readjusted his spectacles, which he had taken off to read. Ho, in handing him the plaque, adroitly substituted another document for the one Ta had laid down. This document, I afterwards learnt, was identical with the original, with the exception of one word added. This word was 'copy' or 'duplicate,' prefixed to the words, 'the original porcelain board of Kung Fu.' Ta objected that the ebony stand was missing, but Ho quietly maintained that the stand was not mentioned

in the wager. Ta Yüeh therefore lost his precious jade plaque in exchange for a worthless imitation made by Wang. There was no friendship lost between Ho and Ta thereafter.

I myself left Ho's service immediately after the execution. Learning that both he and the Fu had decided to hush up the history of the game, as liable to bring them into trouble at Peking, I took upon myself to make the matter public both through my consul and through Chinese sources. It is with great pleasure I have just learnt that both these gentlemen have been degraded. It was with still greater pleasure that, seeing the ex-Chik-fu in the streets of Shanghai some time ago, I jostled against him, and then knocked him down for his confounded impertinence.

Wang's petition, by the way, made no mention of himself at all. He had devoted his last night to pleading for the release of his brothers, exonerating them from all complicity by a masterly memorial. His brothers were released in consequence, and Ho paid the one hundred taels to them instead of to Wang's wife, to compensate them for the damage done to their thumbs. As usual with men disabled from work by torture, these two pitiable rogues are going to the bad, and will doubtless bring themselves under the sword in due course.

Such is the dry history of Wang. It lacks life, as I expected; none the less, I take it to be a fair exhibition of some of the inconveniences of being a Chinaman.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE OUTPUT OF THE MINT.



ANY curious and interesting items may be gathered from the last report of the Deputy-Master of the Mint, and we are able to glean a tangible idea of the wealth of the community when we read that

there were melted down for coinage during the past year one hundred and ten tons of gold, four hundred and seventy tons of silver, and sixty-one tons of bronze. Some of this vast quantity of metal was destined for the colonies, but most of it was for home use. The sovereign still maintains its old boast that it represents twenty shillings' worth of gold; but with the silver it is different, one half-crown having an intrinsic worth of little over tenpence. There has of late years been an increased demand for pence; and this is due, curiously enough, to the popularity of the penny-in-the-slot device. The thoughtless loiterers at railway stations who purchase in this way pennyworths of chocolate or butter-scotch have no idea that in doing so they are in a small measure upsetting arrangements at the Mint. But

the principal machine which causes a vast amount of the bronze coinage to be locked up is the popular slot gas-meter, described in the August issue of *Chambers's Journal*. It is the general custom with the humble gas-consumer to buy back the pennies released periodically by the collector, and in this way tons of the bronze coinage are permanently kept out of circulation.

THAMES SALMON.

The improved sanitary condition of the river Thames since drastic measures have been taken with regard to the sewage of the Metropolis has caused fish to appear in some of the lower reaches where they have not been seen for years, and for this reason the hope has been expressed that the noble salmon might once more be made to thrive in London's historic river. It has been decided, at an influential meeting recently held at the Mansion-House, to commence the experiment of restocking the Thames with salmon, and a committee has been appointed to carry out the work. There are numerous fish-hatcheries in the neighbourhood of the Thames; and endeavours will be made to induce the owners of these

nurseries to hatch ova from foreign sources, and to turn the fish into the river when they are ready to go down to the sea. It is hoped that sufficient funds will be subscribed to carry on these interesting experiments for a series of years, and contributions are invited by the Thames Salmon Association, who have an account at the Counties Bank, Piccadilly Branch, London, W.

IRON ORE IN THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES.

The search for coal in the neighbourhood of Dover has resulted in the finding of a considerable bed of valuable oolitic iron ore, which is believed to extend over a very wide area. Analysis of a washed sample of the ore yields between fifty and sixty per cent. of metal, and it is quite free from sulphur or phosphorus. In Kent, Sussex, and Surrey the wealden ironstone was worked a hundred years ago; but this new ore, raised from the Dover coal-shafts, is of much richer quality. The iron industry which once flourished in the southern counties has left its impress on the local names of villages by the addition of the word 'hammer,' indicating the place where a forge was established—Abinger Hammer, for example.

THE CINEMATOGRAPH IN SURGERY.

The animated photographs which for some time have been the delight of thousands of sightseers and holiday-makers in all parts of the civilised world have now appeared in a new and, it would seem, a very useful rôle. A celebrated French surgeon, M. Doyen, has conceived the idea of picturing in this manner the various phases of an operation from the first cut of the knife to the final adjustment of the bandages, each detail of the work being so excellently shown that a mistake could hardly be made by a receptive observer. At a recent demonstration at the University of Kiel, before a select company of doctors and other scientific men, a complete series of these surgical studies were thrown on a screen, and excited great enthusiasm among those present. The only drawback that we can see to this method of demonstration is, that it is only applicable to operations of very short duration, for a cinematograph film of fifty feet in length—the usual size—is complete in less than one minute; while many a surgical operation, and notably those requiring the greatest care and skill, will cover a period of half-an-hour or more.

GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

By many it is thought that the Americans, in acquiring the Philippines, have made a rather poor bargain, and that repentance may come too late. But it is possibly forgotten that these new Eastern possessions of our Transatlantic cousins may possibly develop into an El Dorado. It was the quest of gold that turned the attention of the Spaniards in this direction four hundred years

ago; but the natives were never really conquered, and there are yet many inland districts where no white man has set his foot. The natives themselves have a superstitious objection to disturb the ground, and the gold which they get is washed in the most primitive way from the streams. Much gold from this source, prettily worked by native artificers, is sold in the shops at Manila. Already mining experts have their eyes upon this promising field for prospecting, and we may feel quite sure that when peace is once more restored the auriferous resources of the Philippines will be scientifically assessed.

A NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC FILM.

Many have been the attempts to introduce a substance which shall effectually displace heavy and brittle glass as a support for the photographic negative image; and perhaps the most successful material yet tried is celluloid. This substance, however, deflagrates with great violence when brought into contact with flame, and it is suspected of exerting an injurious action upon the sensitive chemical emulsion with which it is coated. A new film which has recently been introduced from Germany, under the name 'secco,' is said to obviate these difficulties, while at the same time it is as cheap as the glass plates which it supersedes; and negatives taken upon it which have been submitted to us certainly leave nothing to be desired. The basis of the film is paper, which is coated first with india-rubber solution, next with collodion, and finally with gelatine emulsion. It is exposed, developed, and fixed in the ordinary way, and is then brought into contact with gelatine-coated paper. When dry, the paper support on each side is readily stripped off, leaving a finished negative weighing only a few grains per inch, but tough enough to meet all requirements.

FIREPROOF BUILDING CONSTRUCTION.

The London Portland Cement Company are introducing a new fireproof building material which has been in use for some time in Germany with the most successful results. It is called 'scagliol,' and although its exact composition is a secret, it is understood to be a compound of slaked lime, plaster of Paris, and other ingredients, which are subjected to chemical treatment; after which sand, ashes, or similar material is added. The inventors claim that it is fireproof and soundproof; and a number of experiments show that the claim to the first quality is well founded. The most striking of these was the ignition of three hundredweight of wood soaked with paraffin in a room built of 'scagliol,' the temperature speedily rising inside to two thousand degrees, as measured by a pyrometer, while outside the wall, which was only four inches thick, a thermometer showed no inclination to rise at all. Perhaps the most novel feature of 'scagliol' is the way it lends itself to a very simple method of wall or

partition construction where little weight is required to be carried. For this purpose the material is formed into slabs, with a deep groove all round the edges in which are holes at short intervals. The wall is built up with these in horizontal layers, and liquid mortar of special composition is poured into the tubes formed by the junction of the grooves so as to bind the whole construction into one solid erection.

TINNED HORSE-FLESH.

The British consul at Portland, Oregon, is responsible for the information, which is conveyed in his report for 1898, that a large business is being done in pickled horse-meat. Within the past two or three years, he tells us, large numbers of horses have been brought there and slaughtered, the meat being pickled and shipped overland to European ports. Some of it has been tinned by way of experiment; but the exact details of the industry are kept very quiet. There is among most communities a great prejudice against the use of horse-flesh as food, although the animal is a very clean feeder, and in that respect very different from some of the creatures whose flesh is prized as a delicacy. Apart from this prejudice, the flesh of the horse is coarse and stringy, and certainly inferior in quality to beef or mutton. If tinned horse-flesh is labelled as such, no one can complain of the new industry; but if it is fraudulently sold as something else the authorities can, under the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act, speedily put an end to its importation.

MUSICAL PITCH.

The question is once more being raised in this country of the desirability of a uniform musical pitch. Some years ago the Philharmonic Society in London decided to lower the pitch of its orchestra to that universal on the Continent; and, although there was some confusion at first, the wisdom of that movement is now acknowledged. The great bar to the common adoption of the lower pitch is that its acceptance would render necessary the provision of new instruments by the various military bands throughout the country, and the alteration at great expense of organs both in concert halls and in churches. Pianoforte manufacturers have hitherto held a neutral position in this matter of alteration of pitch; but now, on the initiative of Messrs Broadwood and Sons, they are nearly all expressing their willingness to adopt the lower pitch, provided that the movement is a general one. The exact pitch of a sound can be accurately measured by its number of vibrations per second; thus, the old pitch would mean for the note A a piano-wire giving four hundred and fifty-four vibrations at a temperature of sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, while the lower pitch which it is proposed to adopt this autumn would mean only four hundred

and thirty-nine vibrations for the same note. The matter is one of great importance to singers, who have now to strain their voices in order to reach a higher altitude than that intended by the composer whose works they interpret, for those compositions were written when the pitch was even lower than that now to be adopted as the standard.

STILTON CHEESE.

In the making of Cheddar and other cheeses there is no trade secret involved, and the cheese is much the same if made in Cheddar itself or in far-off Canada. But with Stilton it is different, and this, the king of cheeses, is hard to imitate; indeed, it has always been thought that something peculiar in its manufacture gives to it its excellent qualities. In order to elucidate the mysteries connected with it, Mr J. M. Dugdale was recently commissioned by the Royal Agricultural Society to visit the Stilton district of Leicestershire and report upon the manufacture. The result may be found by those interested in the subject in the new quarterly number of the society's *Journal* (vol. x. No. 38). There seems from this report to be no royal road to the making of Stilton cheese, nor is there any great mystery connected with it. Mr Dugdale concludes that it is impossible to lay down any definite or precise rules regarding the manufacture so as to suit every case. It is really a matter of practical experience, each farm having its own method. If a maker knows how to rennet the milk properly, and how to get the right amount of acidity at the time of hooping, he has acquired probably two of the most important details in the process of manufacture of Stilton cheese.

OSTRICH-FARMING.

The rearing of the ostrich as a farming speculation is, perhaps, one of the most curious, as well as most profitable, of modern industries. From Africa, the home of the giant bird, the business has extended to California, where the climate is remarkably well adapted to the enterprise. In 1885 forty-two of the big birds were landed on American soil, and since that time they have increased and multiplied until at the present day they number upwards of two hundred. Mr C. F. Holder contributes to the *Scientific American* an interesting account of this farm in Southern California, from which may be learnt all about the manner of feeding, breeding, and rearing the chicks. The male bird shares with the female the care of the young, each covering the nest for a certain number of hours daily. The chicks are reared artificially, so that the parents may be kept at the business of hatching only; and in six weeks after they leave the shell they are tall and robust birds. The ostriches are reared solely for their feathers, which are taken from the living birds at stated intervals. There is no truth

in the legend that the bird hides its head in the sand on the approach of an enemy. On the contrary, they are both fearless and pugnacious. Neither is it true that they leave their eggs to be hatched by the rays of the sun; as we have already seen, they are most assiduous in their nesting-duties.

INSECTICIDE.

Young entomologists are well acquainted with the 'killing bottle,' which is an ordinary bottle in the bottom of which a little plaster of Paris, associated with a deadly poison (cyanide), is introduced. Any insect put therein immediately succumbs owing to the enclosed atmosphere of hydrocyanic acid. Professor Johnson, the State Entomologist for Maryland, has been applying with success the same principle to trees up to seventeen feet in height, in order to free them from the insects which infest them, without injury to fruit or foliage. In carrying out this fumigation process the tree to be treated is enclosed in a square tent made of a light wooden framework and oiled canvas, and one-fifth of a gramme of potassic cyanide is measured out for each cubic foot of space enclosed—at least that is the quantity of poison which has been found efficacious for a deciduous tree. It is said that any one can use the remedy without danger, a statement which is hardly justified when a most deadly poison is in question.

FURTHER PROGRESS IN WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

The French naval authorities seem to have taken up Marconi's method of conveying messages without the help of wires with the greatest enthusiasm. It has now been demonstrated that a ship moving through the water at various speeds can communicate with a station on land up to a distance of forty-two miles. Experiments have recently been carried on between a ship in the English Channel and two points on the French and English coast respectively. It was shown also that by a recent device either place could be cut out from communication, messages intended for one not being received by the other. In Vienna experiments have been made with balloons, which demonstrate that correspondence can be carried on between a balloon and the earth, or between two balloons. All these experiments go to show that the wireless method of telegraphy may prove most useful under certain circumstances, while for communication between stations where wires are available, the ordinary telegraphic apparatus cannot be approached either with regard to speed or efficiency.

NATURAL GAS.

We have all heard much of the gas which in many places in America issues in great volumes from the ground, and is extensively used both for illumination and for various industrial purposes;

and it may be that many of us have felt envious of this gift from mother-earth. But the phenomenon is by no means unknown in our own country. The discovery of a natural gas was made in East Sussex nearly twenty-five years ago, when a deep artesian well tube was found to yield gas as well as water. A still more important find of gas was made three years ago in the same district in a railway cutting near Heathfield station; and the railway company finding that the supply is of a constant character, and shows no sign of diminution, have decided to light their premises with it. Heathfield station will be the first in this country to be lighted in such a novel way.

MAHOGANY.

This fine old wood has been out of fashion until lately, having been superseded by teak, walnut, maple, and other inferior, if showy, woods. But the tide has turned; and mahogany, from being a drug in the market, is now at a premium, and is being freely used in all directions. Not long ago a single log of African mahogany was sold in Liverpool for the unprecedented amount of four hundred and eight pounds odd. A few years ago African mahogany was scarcely known; but through the enterprise of a Liverpool merchant, its merits have now been established to such an extent that mahogany from many other sources cannot now be imported to successfully compete with it. The great log referred to was bought for the purpose of being cut into veneers, which are now used in the United States to decorate the palatial railway cars of the Pullman Company and also the princely residences of New York millionaires. At home, too, the fashion is spreading, nearly all the up-to-date houses having mahogany doors as well as inner fittings. Some of the finest doors of this beautiful wood are those in the Naval and Military Club, which is situated in Piccadilly, and was originally Cambridge House, the residence of the present Duke of Cambridge's father. There are also some handsome doors and a beautiful mahogany staircase at No. 2 Grosvenor Square; and, indeed, the entrances along most of the fashionable thoroughfares are made of this wood. In Edinburgh, too, especially in Moray Place and Abercromby Place, there are some superb specimens of mahogany doors and pillars; and it seems probable that the ancient reign of this royal wood will be re-established and become more absolute than ever. Teak is hard and cold beside mahogany, besides being needlessly heavy. Walnut is a more fanciful wood, but lacks the richness of its older competitor; while maple is well enough in a bar or a ship's cabin, but not in a palace or a mansion, or even a club. There is a warmth in mahogany which is wholly lacking in most other woods, even so-called 'red' woods; there is a softness, too, which is never quite

destroyed even by the highest polish; and, along with these elegant qualities, there is a substantiality which even oak cannot display when used in the form of furniture and fittings. The time is probably a long way off when mahogany will cease to be associated with hospitality, and when the diner-out will be wholly comfortable with his legs under any other description of wood whatever!

ICE-BREAKERS.

Sir W. G. Armstrong (Armstrong-Whitworth Co.) writes to us correcting one statement in the article which appeared in this *Journal* for July on the new Russian ice-breaker, the *Ermak*, built by that firm. It was there stated that the scheme for conveying trains across Lake Baikal in Siberia by means of a ferry steamer had been abandoned in favour of a railway round the southern end of the lake. This, it appears, is not the case, as the steamer has been reconstructed on the shores of Lake Baikal, and was successfully launched on 29th June. Some further information as to ice-breakers was contained in a paper read by Mr H. F. Swan to the Institute of Naval Architects. The employment of ice-breakers, he said, was destined to become a very important factor in connection with steam navigation generally, and many ports which formerly were partially and even entirely closed during the whole of the winter would become available for commerce all the year round. He gave particulars of two vessels built last year which had been at work during the winter with eminent success. These were the *Sampo*, of two thousand tons displacement and three hundred horse-power, built for the Finnish Government, and the *Ermak*, of eight thousand tons displacement and ten thousand horse-power, built for the Russian Government. Ice-breakers were three times as powerful as any vessel previously built. The vessels were extremely strongly constructed, and subdivided into forty-eight compartments, whose water-tightness has been tested in the most efficient manner. Repeated trials had shown that with the *Ermak* and *Sampo* a pack of ice of practically any thickness could be negotiated. Experience with the *Ermak* showed that she had broken compressed ice eight feet three inches thick, and that she had gone through a field of ice of about forty inches with six inches of snow upon it at a speed of three knots. Moreover, she had been driven at a speed of ten knots through clear ice of twenty-four inches, while ice eighteen inches thick had little effect upon her. Immediately on her arrival in Russia word was sent from a northern port that a number of steamers were in great jeopardy. She at once proceeded there, and was the means of liberating thirty-three steamers of the aggregate value of a million and a half sterling. She subsequently returned to Cronstadt and St Petersburg, and was instrumental in relieving and facilitating the entry of forty steamers

several weeks earlier than if they had waited for the ordinary opening of navigation. These performances were a very clear proof of the commercial value of the vessel. A very important application of ice-breaking steamers was shown in their ability to form connecting-links with railway systems in crossing large stretches of water which it would be impossible or too costly to bridge.

Admiral Makaroff, of the Imperial Russian Navy, said the problem to be solved in building an ice-breaker for the required purpose was a difficult one, but English shipbuilders had proved that the difficulties could be overcome. He described the work the *Ermak* had accomplished while he was in charge of her, and said she had already been tried in the Arctic seas. It was intended in a little while to make further experiments in the Polar seas to see really how near a vessel of that description could get to the North Pole.

SEPTEMBER.

THERE, in the soft September sun,
The sleeping heather lay;
So sweet the silence, I—for one—
Wished all the world away.

My mood was neither gay nor sad,
But simply glad to be:
Contented, prizing what I had;
For once, forgetting thee!

The air, with soft, divine effect,
Breathed all my cares away;
The passion where my heart lay wrecked
Was a dream of yesterday!

And though I loved thee, dear, so well—
Ah! though I love thee yet!
My heart—how strange it seems to tell!—
Holds but a calm regret.

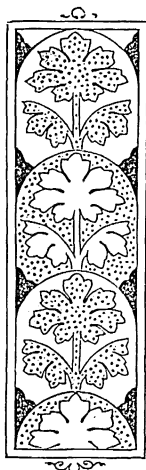
Thank God for Nature's wider scope:
She takes the fevered heart,
And tutors it to quiet hope,
From men and things apart.

She bids it watch her patient growth,
Her peace, her large content;
And learn the lesson, nothing loth,
So exquisitely sent.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

A TALE OF THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

By G. A. HENTY.

CHAPTER I.



QUEENSTOWN HARBOUR was looking its best on a bright day in the early autumn of 188-. Eight great ironclads were lying anchored in two lines. Inside these lines were

half-a-dozen lighter and prettier ships-of-war, the cruisers, more or less fast, of the fleet, and still retaining the outward form of ships, which was more than could be said for the formidable monsters lying outside them. A number of screw colliers added to the life, though hardly to the beauty, of the scene; while moving to and fro among the larger craft were excursion steamers from Cork. A whole fleet of white-winged yachts, steam-launches belonging to the various ships-of-war, and white row-boats with from four to twenty oarsmen, swept along through the water. Now and then a torpedo-boat, carrying a great white wave at her bow, came rushing in from seaward, or steamed out again as if on a life or death mission. Four or five of these craft were moored side by side a short distance astern of the ironclads. Nearer inshore lay a great American liner which had come in half-an-hour before, and was now discharging her mails into a tender, while her passengers clustered along the rails surveying the naval spectacle with lively interest. A group, consisting of a gentleman and two ladies, were standing talking together on the upper deck.

'And you are quite sure you can get us the tickets for the ball, Mr Macnamara?'

'Quite certain, Miss Aspern. I knew from your father's letter that you were coming by the *Alaska*; and, as she was due here this morning, I applied at once to the committee for tickets for you, making sure that you would like to land here; so that, in fact, I have the tickets. But do not let that influence you, as the demand is unlimited, and I have already

promised them should you not care about using them.'

'Then I think that settles it,' the young lady said in a clear, decided voice. 'Don't you think so, mamma?'

Mrs Aspern was no exception to the American rule that the chief end of women is to minister to the wishes and caprices of their daughters from the time that these are out of long clothes to that of marriage, and at once replied, 'Well, if you think so, Clemence; but is there time now?'

'Oh yes, plenty of time. It is fortunate now that we decided in the first place to land here, as our baggage is with the rest of the things for Queenstown. The captain said this morning that he would have it picked out, as we had changed our mind, and meant to go on to Liverpool; but I will go and tell him that our things may go on shore with the rest. Will you go at once, mamma, and tell Harriet to pack the things in the cabin? Tell her she must hurry up, for we shall have to go ashore in half-an-hour.'

'I have got my own steam-launch alongside, Miss Aspern, so you will have until the last possible moment. I think we may count upon an hour yet.'

'Thank you, Mr Macnamara; we can fix things up nicely by that time.'

Mr Macnamara was one of the principal merchants in Cork, and was correspondent and agent for Mr Aspern, a Cincinnati millionaire, whose fortune rested on the solid foundation of pork. Miss Aspern did not care about pork, but was fond of Europe, and made very frequent visits across the Atlantic, sometimes under the chaperonage of her mother, but more often under that of various friends of her father who felt it a distinction to have the wealthy heiress of Thomas Aspern under their charge.

The present was to be a short run, princi-

pally a shopping expedition to Paris; a dozen new dresses from Worth being declared by Miss Aspern to be a positive necessity for the approaching season at New York. As soon as her mother had arranged for her trunks to go ashore with the rest of the Queenstown luggage, she ran below and gave such effectual aid in packing the cabin boxes that in half-an-hour she was again on deck.

'I told you half-an-hour, Mr Macnamara,' she said, 'and everything is fixed up and ready to go ashore.'

'Then the sooner we go the better, Miss Aspern; because I imagine that your trunks will have been labelled on to Liverpool, and we shall want to see them relabelled for Cork. Can I be of any assistance in getting the things up?'

'No, thank you; the steward was bringing them up as I came along. Here comes mamma. Mr Macnamara wants to be off, mamma, so we had better say good-bye at once to the people we know.'

Another five minutes and the party were on board the steam-launch and making for shore.

'I hope you will bring us down here to-morrow again,' Miss Aspern said to him. 'I want to look at those ugly ships close at hand. I suppose they will let us go over some of them?'

'With pleasure, Miss Aspern. It is a sight worth seeing; and though we know'—and he smiled—'that in most things you are ahead of us, this is one of the things you can't see on your side of the water.'

'No,' the girl said carelessly; 'we haven't turned our attention that way. When we do, I reckon it will be about time for you to take a back seat. I met some of your officers last year at Montreal. I was staying there with a schoolfellow who has married a Canadian, and they were there at the time; they belonged to some ships at Halifax, and had got three weeks' leave. They were quite nice fellows, with no starch about them.'

'Perhaps you may meet some of them to-night, Miss Aspern. Of course the ball is given to the fleet, and most of the officers who are not on duty will be there.'

'Well, I call that downright pretty,' Miss Aspern said later on, as she entered the ballroom. 'That is what we want at home, mamma; we have nothing but black coats. They ought to keep some troops in New York, and dress them up in scarlet like that. It is real good, isn't it? We know what balls are at New York, Mr Macnamara; and I have been to them in London too; and I was at the President's reception in Paris, and there were plenty of uniforms there; but this mixture of blue and scarlet takes the cake altogether.'

'Now, Miss Aspern, shall I find you some partners?'

'Not yet,' the girl said. 'I get plenty of dancing. I should like to look on for a bit.'

The room was indeed full of men in uniform; and although the blue coat of the navy predominated, all the officers of the garrison were present, besides many others who had come down from Dublin and the Curragh. Mr Macnamara was therefore kept busy for some time explaining to Miss Aspern the uniforms of the various branches of the service.

'There,' she exclaimed suddenly—'there is a face I know—that naval officer, Mr Macnamara. He was one of those I met at Montreal; he is a Mr Winter. Please, fetch him to me. Only say a lady wishes to speak to him.'

Lieutenant Winter had no acquaintances in Cork, and his face expressed some little surprise as he was brought across the room. However, the moment he saw Miss Aspern he recognised her.

'Well, Miss Aspern, this is an unexpected pleasure. Who would have thought of seeing you here?'

'Why not? I told you that I was often in England, and that we were sure to run against each other.'

'I remember you said so; but my faith was not strong. I am, of course, most of my time away from England; and when at home I am not to be found in any of the gilded halls of fashion, which you frequent. But when did you come?'

'Only this morning. I arrived in the *Alaska*.'

'You have certainly lost no time, then, Miss Aspern. I saw her in the harbour unloading her mails, but had no notion that you were on board. Well, may I have the pleasure of a dance? After that I shall be delighted to introduce any number of partners to you.'

'We will talk a little first,' the girl said; 'when one once begins to dance there is an end of that. Which of those ships are you in? Mr Macnamara, with whom mamma and I are staying, is going to take us to see them to-morrow, and I shall expect you to do the honours and to explain to me why they are so ugly.'

'I shall be delighted to do the honours, Miss Aspern; but, as far as my own ship goes, one might as well invite a lady to a tea-party in a dolls' house. I command one of the torpedo-boats.'

'Oh yes. I saw them rushing in and out of the harbour. They look wicked, those boats do; but it must be delightful to sit on deck and feel them flying along.'

'Yes,' Winter said doubtfully, 'that is certainly pleasant; and I can assure you it wants something pleasant to make up for the drawbacks of existence upon them. If you can fancy yourself living in a dog's kennel, rolled and shaken, thrown up and bumped down, with a perpetual hum and vibration in your ears, you would quickly wish yourself on shore again. The motion is so tremendous that it upsets even old sailors, and

it is necessary to be always on the watch and to keep tight hold of something, or you are likely to be jerked across the cabin when below, and break an arm or a couple of ribs, or be sent overboard if you are on deck. But, such as it is, I shall be delighted to show you the craft, and afterwards to take you over some of the battle-ships.'

Then the conversation turned to Montreal, the mutual friends there, and the occasion upon which they had met; and three or four dances went by before they stood up. Then, after putting down his name for two dances, with her permission the young lieutenant brought up several of his friends, and her card was very soon filled up.

'I have several friends whom I want to introduce to you, Miss Aspern,' Mr Macnamara said, coming up to her afterwards.

'Too late, Mr Macnamara; my card is quite full. I suppose I ought to say that I am sorry, but I am not. I can dance with Irishmen any time I am out in the States, but these young sailors, in the glory of their uniform, are delightful. I don't mean Mr Winter, of course, because I have seen him before, and we are old friends, but the others. Your people are generally stiff, at any rate until the ice is broken; and then, you know, in London the young men I am introduced to all know that dad is rolling in money, and they regard me as an American heiress, and it is unpleasant altogether. Well, I mean to enjoy myself to-night.'

Miss Aspern did enjoy herself, and on her drive back to Mr Macnamara's declared that it was the most pleasant evening she had ever spent; while Winter's friends agreed that the American girl was first-rate fun, with no nonsense about her though she was got up so, and was pretty enough to give herself airs if she had liked. Winter had not thought it necessary to confide to them that she was a very wealthy heiress, for he thought that she would herself prefer that nothing should be said about it. It had been settled that Miss Aspern, with her mother, to whom she had introduced Winter, and Mr Macnamara, should come down to lunch on board Torpedo-boat 240. They were to come off in Mr Macnamara's steam-launch, for Winter could not be sure that he should be able to send the torpedo boat's dingy, and had warned Miss Aspern that it was more than possible that the craft would not be found when she came down.

'They keep us running about, you see. Up goes the signal, "Four torpedo-boats will go out and search the coast for suspicious craft," and it would never do for me to hoist the signal in return, "I am expecting two ladies to lunch, and can't go." So, if I am away, please visit the ironclads first; they are all open for inspection. By the time that you have done them I hope I

may be back. You may be sure that I shall not waste more time than I can help over the run, especially as we know perfectly well that there is nothing to be found, for hostilities do not commence for another ten days.'

Fortunately the exigencies of the service did not require the departure of No. 240 before the arrival of the party from Cork.

'Well, this is a tiny little thing, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern exclaimed when she stepped on board. And, indeed, after the great ship that she had left the day before, the torpedo-boat looked insignificant. 'And to think that she is really meant for fighting, and that she could destroy one of those ugly monsters over there.'

'Yes, if she could get close to her, and if the ugly monster did not send her to the bottom long before she got near enough to let off one of her torpedoes. Now, with your permission, we will begin by having lunch, because we are under orders to go for a cruise at half-past two.'

'Cannot you take us with you, Mr Winter?' Miss Aspern asked.

'Yes, if you would like to go; but if so I think you had better keep below until we are fairly off. I don't think the Admiral would approve of seeing lady passengers sitting on deck when we are starting on what I suppose he considers service. Once fairly away, of course, you could come up, and then you could see the working of the engines. I would have asked two or three of my friends to meet you, Miss Aspern; but four is the extreme number that can pack into my cabin.'

'By the way, before we go down, Mr Macnamara, will you order your launch to sheer off? If she remains alongside, the Admiral might suspect that we had passengers on board.'

The launch was ordered to steam in to the shore, and not to come out again until they saw the torpedo-boat return from her trip.

'Now for the cabin, Mrs Aspern; please be very careful how you go down. Will you and Miss Aspern go down first and seat yourselves at the farther end of the table? That will leave room for us to shift into our places.'

'Well, this is the tiniest place I ever took a meal in, Mr Winter. Why, even the cat-boats and the smallest yachts in the bay have better accommodation than your Government gives you.'

'It is quite large enough for one, I can assure you; the smaller the better when she is lively. I told you you would have to make up your mind to rough it if you came on board.'

'Oh, I don't call this roughing it,' she said, 'and you won't get any pity from me except on the score of want of room.'

The young lieutenant had exerted himself to do justice to the occasion; he had slept in Cork, and had there obtained all the materials for a dainty little lunch, with an abundance of choice flowers to beautify the little cabin. So much

did the party enjoy the meal that they were surprised when their host, looking at his watch, begged them to excuse him, as it was time to see about getting under way; and in a minute or two sounds were heard overhead, then there was a clanking of the chains, followed by a slight vibration, becoming more and more rapid until everything on the table quivered and shook. Five minutes later the lieutenant descended into the cabin.

'Now I can let you out of prison, Mrs Aspern; we are nearly a mile from the flag-ship already, and you can safely come up.'

Camp-stools were arranged on deck, and on these they seated themselves.

'This is splendid,' Miss Aspern exclaimed. 'How we do fly along!'

'We are not going much faster than you travelled across the Atlantic, Miss Aspern; but from your being so much nearer to the surface of the water the speed no doubt appears very much greater.'

'We seem to be going double as fast,' the girl said. 'Are you racing the other boats?'

'No. We are going full speed; that is all. We separate directly. We are to keep along the coast, one of the others goes east, and the other two out to sea, separating as they go; so, between us, we shall search a radius of thirty miles or so. I am glad we have the western station, for the coast is very fine in that direction. When you are disposed for a change you shall inspect the craft—that is, as far as you can inspect it, for you must content yourself with looking down the scuttle into the men's quarters, as you could not possibly get down there; while as to the engine-room, I should advise you to go no farther than the foot of the ladder, for there is not an inch of room to move about, and the heat is prodigious. Forward of that is the torpedo-room. On deck here you see we have machine-guns; they are intended, of course, for action against another torpedo or ship's boats. It would be a mere waste

of time to fire them at big craft, and, indeed, all hands would be below except those required to discharge the torpedoes; for, of course, we should be exposed to a heavy musketry and machine-gun fire.'

Mrs Aspern and Mr Macnamara both declared their preference for sitting quietly on deck; but Miss Aspern investigated all the arrangements of the little craft.

'It is wonderful, mamma,' she said when she returned to her seat; 'everything has got its place, and if it hadn't there would be no moving at all. The engine is the 'cutest little thing you ever saw, and it goes so fast you can hardly see it; and everything is so bright and clean that you would think the men had no time for anything but rubbing and polishing. When I get back I have quite made up my mind that I shall get dad to have a boat just like this built for me. I mean as to the ship and engines; of course I should have a great deal larger cabin than Mr Winter has, because then there would be no torpedo-room or ammunition-room, or anything of that sort. There would be plenty of room forward for the men and the cooking-place and all that sort of thing, and aft there will be a large cabin where there would be room for ten or twelve to sit down to lunch, and a little private cabin for me. It would do splendid for the Hudson and for the Sound, and for going out and seeing the yacht races.'

The trip over, the ironclads were visited, and their size, cleanliness, and order greatly admired.

'We shall be coming back in about a fortnight, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern said as she stepped into the launch to go ashore. 'I do hope that we shall find you here; but if not, mind I have your promise that you will come down and see us if you are stationed on our side of the water; and anyhow, mamma will write to the address you have given us, and let you know where you can find us next time we come to England.'

(To be continued.)

THE HOME OF INDIA-RUBBER.

ACROSS THE HEAD-WATERS OF THE AMAZON.

By A MAN ON THE SPOT.



AMONG the consequences of the enormous increase in the use of india-rubber, which from being a little-known commodity has become one of the necessities of modern civilisation, has been the rapid exploration and development of the forest-covered regions drained by the Amazon and its affluents. From these tropical latitudes, where, during the driest season, brimming rivers skirt endless leagues of gum-forest, and where during the summer months the water enters everywhere,

and makes of thousands of square miles of tropical verdure lakes in which one may easily be lost and perish of want and fever, the india-rubber of the world is brought. From these surroundings of danger, of pestilence, of famine, great fortunes have been, and are being, gained.

The constant pressure of demand upon supply, besides doubling the price of the product, has driven the rubber-seekers farther and farther into the interior, and has resulted in all the forest readily accessible to the navigable streams being taken up under some form of concession

from the government exercising jurisdiction in the locality, or by the simple process of taking possession under the title conferred by the power of a repeating rifle. The working of these properties involves a life of great hardship for all those concerned. The workers are actually, though not nominally, slaves. They are usually brought under contract from the better-populated and healthier districts, receiving an advance of from £10 to £30 each, or from six months' to a year's wages; and, from the moment this advance is made to the end of a life which will be wretchedly short and full of misery, these unfortunate men can never hope to pay what they owe, and remain permanently in debt to their employers.

Having been transported by canoe or *batalon* to some far interior point, the rubber-gatherer is put down in the steaming forest, inundated during some months of each year, where his rations will be a little rice, dried meat, salt (a very little of the latter, which is often worth from one shilling and sixpence to two shillings a pound), coffee, sugar, and *cañasa* (the vilest form of liquor, made from the sugar-cane), and the products of the soil, such as bananas, &c., that he can grow or finds planted there by his predecessors. The item of liquor, although last on the list, is the most important. This class does not include any teetotalers and very few moderate drinkers among its members; drink, cards, and the lowest forms of vice are the only recreations of the rubber-gatherer's life, which in the case of an ordinary man may extend to five years, or with an exceptionally strong constitution to seven or even ten. In the early morning the gatherer swallows his cup of black coffee and his 'trags' of liquor, takes with him a number of earthenware or tin gill cups, a piece of clay, and a small hatchet, and starts out to visit the rubber-trees, which will number from one hundred to one hundred and fifty, in his *estrada* or section. He has previously cut through the forest a narrow path, and built himself a furnace for the treatment of the milk which he will collect. At the first tree he makes three V-shaped incisions with his hatchet as high as he can reach, and at equal distances around the tree, which to-morrow he will repeat a little lower down, until at the end of the season he will have reached the ground. From these incisions the milk immediately begins to flow, and he places beneath each one of his cups, making it adhere to the tree with the clay which he carries. This is his work until he has tapped all his trees; and by this time he will have worked back to his hut, and is ready for a breakfast of a little dried meat, mandioca flour, and liquor, of which the two former are probably covered with green-mould or are half-rotten from the steaming damp of the swamp in which he lives. He has now to collect his cups, which should be

nearly full of the milk which is the first stage of india-rubber, and to coagulate it in his furnace. This is constructed of mud, with an opening above, over which is hung a paddle with a broad blade smeared with clay. This blade is covered with the milk, and the furnace fed with a special palm wood, called in the upper districts the *motacu*, and lower down the *urucury*. The dense black smoke which envelops the paddle coagulates the milk, which is kept constantly renewed until the resultant mass weighs from ten to twenty pounds. It is now stripped from the blade like a glove from the hand, and we have the crude rubber of commerce, which, if carefully gathered and smoked, is of the finest class.

In addition to the privations and hardships incidental to a life so isolated, these men are compelled to work for several hours each day in a swamp in which they may sink from their ankles to over their knees, they must constantly pass rivers swarming with alligators, are exposed to agues, fevers, and that terrible disease known as *espundia*, surrounded by poisonous snakes and insects, pestered by clouds of mosquitoes, cut off from all healthy recreation, and, finally, die, often alone, in some miserable hut or in the deep recesses of the forest, where their very bodies will be abandoned to the tiger and the alligator.

As we penetrate farther into the continent we begin to leave behind us the immense steaming plain of the Amazon, and find districts on the great upper plains watered by the tributaries of that enormous river—themselves waterways of great size—where the inundations are slight or altogether cease, and where we no longer have the miasmatic air nor the fetid smell of rotting vegetation; but in proportion as the country becomes more habitable and healthier the india-rubber becomes scarcer and of a lower quality. For the rubber-tree needs for its greatest perfection those conditions which are most detrimental to human existence—intense heat and abundant moisture. In those upper plains the climate is entirely healthy; the thermometer ranges from 40° to 98°; the country is suitable to Europeans, is rich in all natural products, and has immediately behind it a sanatorium readily accessible—the eastern range of the Andes, thirteen thousand feet high. We find the regions not subject to inundations commencing at an altitude of about fifteen hundred feet, mostly covered with a forest of moderate size, and producing sugar, coffee, vanilla, mandioca, rice, maize, bananas, and other fruits; and here cattle-breeding on a large scale is being gradually introduced. The expense of rearing cattle is confined to paying a few men, usually Indians, who periodically round them up and slaughter the required number, 'jerking' the flesh in the sun, melting the fat and packing it into *gurrone*s, to be sent to light the mines of the coast ranges, and drying the hides to be hereafter shipped to the coast.

The value of these products ranges from eight to twenty shillings per head of cattle, but the cost of production is almost nothing. Were capital to be introduced into these regions, the hides could be made into leather, the grease into candles, and uses found for the other products upon the spot; but as yet the country is entirely undeveloped, and will probably remain so while fortunes are to be made in rubber, even at the expense of life and health. From the valleys, which bring down the melted snows of the Andes to form the rivers, and finally to swell the great Amazon, comes the finest coffee in the world; almost every stream contains gold in its bed; and the vanilla, which grows here wild and is very easily cultivated, commands a ready sale at very high prices.

The india-rubber in these upper districts has never yet been worked, although now the price has risen so greatly as to make it probable that even this, which is of second quality and not abundant, would give good results. The communications are naturally very defective. Canoes hollowed out of a single tree and boats built on the banks navigate nearly all the known rivers; and there is also a little fleet of steamers which ply between the rapids of the lower rivers and the headwaters of navigation; while below the rapids steamers owned by English and other European companies make regular trips to the Atlantic. The western outlet is by crossing the eastern Cordilleras by mule-paths, badly made and very indifferently kept up. But a journey from the rubber districts to the Pacific is one of great interest and by routes very little known. From the principal interior towns to the head of navigation you travel by a steam-launch, probably built in Glasgow or Blackwall, and put together on the upper side of the rapids. As you gradually move westward the river becomes narrower and shallower, until at last you reach, after a voyage of two or three weeks, the highest point of navigation.

If it is clear weather you will now see far away in front of you, perhaps a hundred or a hundred and twenty miles off, the summits of the Cordilleras, probably capped with snow. Here you will exchange water for land, and in the little port which marks the end of the road you will begin to perceive that, though as yet on the Atlantic side of the mountains, you are now nearing the Pacific side of the continent. Rubber is no longer the only subject of conversation; the talk will be of coffee, sugar, hides, distilling, and of imports from the coast; and, after perhaps some months or years, you will again hear the tang-tang of the mules as the old bellmare is led in with a long string of mules behind her laden with cargo. Your friend the steam-launch is soon loaded with this and similar cargo, gives a farewell whistle, and in a few moments has turned the corner, and has broken the only tie between you and the Atlantic. If you have

spent some years in the *gomales* you will find the ride out a trying one. You have to climb thirteen thousand feet, and the road is not a turnpike. Sometimes you will need both your hands to thrust aside the branches, and, having forgotten to keep your toes well turned in, will catch your feet in a root, with much straining on the part of the mule and much agony on yours as the result. Or in some of the deep ditches into which the road is sometimes worn you will forget to raise your feet, and the mule will drag you along forcibly, scraping the banks on both sides, entirely unable to understand why you should want to stop. At first at night you will camp in the dry bed of some backwater of the river, where you may hear great *antas* crashing through the tall reeds on their way to drink, or the deep murmur, hardly to be called a growl, of the jaguar; then in the early morning a dip in the river, which is already becoming more of a torrent; after that a bowl of *lagua*, a mess composed of maize meal, dried meat, fat, salt, and water, flavoured with the universal *aji*, or red pepper—and so to march.

The farther you advance westward the forest becomes less luxuriant and the animals less formidable. On your river journey you will have seen the *marimono* monkey, a great black beast standing four feet and more high; then, later on, the *trapiche*, a smaller red monkey, uttering a peculiarly harsh cry, supposed to resemble the sound from a badly-oiled *trapiche*, or cane-crushing machine; then the ordinary *mons*, scant of hair and hideously ugly, the night-monkey, who sleeps all day and amuses himself and keeps his neighbours awake all night by a particularly doleful whistling; and, last, the 'ladies' monkey,' a little fellow, hardly larger than your hand, and very readily tamed. As the days pass and you have mounted some thousands of feet, the country seems to unroll itself behind you, and you begin to get some of the most wonderful views in the world; and if it is the winter-time you will begin to wish that you had several thick suits of clothes with you, that you might put them all on at once. At last, after a final climb of four or five thousand feet, which you find you are expected to do in five hours, you will leave behind you the forest, which has been your companion so long, and emerge upon the grassy sides of the eastern Cordilleras. And now, when the top is gained, let us hope that the day is clear and not too cold; for, looking back, you will see all the way you have so laboriously come, and in the far, far distance the dark level line of forest which marks the great plain in which you said farewell to the little steamer; while between you and it are numberless spurs, gorges, valleys, mountain torrents, and endless leagues of dark-green forest, forming a wonderful contrast to the scene before you. For there, looking westward, you see a

country of great altitude, wrinkled with hills, barren, treeless, waterless, covered with coarse grass, dreary and uninviting. The forest has ended some thousand feet below you, and is replaced here by the poorest of herbage, watered by the scantiest of rains. And when you pursue your journey, from that farthest peak upon the

western horizon you will see the same parched, waterless country, only now with less of herbage, gradually changing into a frightful desert, scorching hot during the day and bitterly cold at night, until at length the waters of the Pacific end the vista, and give you an opportunity to renew your acquaintance with steamers and civilisation.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

By ISABEL MAUDE HAMILL, Author of *A Bit of Blue China*, *The Golden Shoes*, &c.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



It was an old-fashioned, high-walled garden, in which grew all sorts of sweet-smelling, old-fashioned flowers—mignonette, stocks, and lad's-love predominating. At the far end were several beehives, whose inhabitants had chosen the most inconvenient time of the whole day—11.30 A.M.—for their owner to swarm. They heeded nothing that he was a schoolmaster, and that at the very moment in which they were hanging in thick brown clusters on the branch of a neighbouring tree he was deep in the mysteries of Cæsar's *Gallie War*, surrounded by a group of lads whose eyes, sad to say, looked with more longing through the open windows at the gaily-coloured butterflies flitting hither and thither than at the Latin books before them.

Suddenly the master looked out eagerly, his quick ear having caught the faint sound of buzzing in the air. He strained his eyes in the direction from which it came, and saw a large, dark mass moving slowly away over the garden-wall.

Now, bees were one of his two hobbies; the other was butterflies; and to lose a swarm was more than he could contemplate with equanimity. But what could he do? If it were said in the little town that the Grammar School master neglected the boys to look after his bees it might get to the governors' ears—and then!

What a dilemma to be placed in! For a moment he hesitated; then he decided that the bees must go, and with an inward groan, which perhaps accounted for the outward sharpness of his manner when he next spoke, he turned his eyes from the bees to books and boys.

'Such beauties, too!' he murmured.

'Yes, sir. I didn't quite catch what you said,' remarked a bright-eyed lad, the wag of the class.

'I did not speak. Go on with your work, Robertson; you are always looking about and listening when your eyes should be on your book.'

'Beg pardon, sir; but I really thought you spoke. And—I thought I heard the bees;' and Robertson winked at the next boy as he made this remark.

'You attend to your lessons, sir, and never

mind the bees,' replied the poor man, irritated to think that this sharp youngster dare make a joke at his expense.

Lessons were over; and, as the clock struck twelve, the boys rushed out of the schoolroom into the field attached to the head-master's house, which was used as a playground, and there let off their superabundant steam.

Edward Martyn rose, locked his desk as soon as the last boy had disappeared, and, putting on a straw hat, walked slowly towards the hives.

He was a tall, thin man, with the slight stoop which often betokens the student; and his feet and hands, though not large, had the appearance of being loosely jointed. His hair inclined to red, and his somewhat straggling beard partook of the same hue; but his face was that of a scholar and a thinker. He was, as are many intellectual, thoughtful men, retiring and shy, and a bachelor. He had been master of Burycum-Thorpe Grammar School upwards of four years, and during that time had gone very little into society; while the young ladies rather made fun of him and his hobbies—in fact, behind his back, they were so rude as to call him 'The Insect Man.'

The few who had taken the trouble to know Edward Martyn appreciated him greatly. He had a fund of information concerning the animal world which made him a delightful companion on an excursion; and many a happy ramble he and one or two kindred spirits indulged in on a holiday afternoon.

His housekeeper, a woman of fifty, had come with him to Bury, and woe be to any boy whom she heard making fun of their master, or indulging in jokes at his expense, as, alas! is the habit of schoolboys. Mrs Peggy Partington was the sort of person of whom people stood rather in awe. Shrewd in her dealings and sharp in manner, the tradesman who attempted to overcharge her came in for a lecture on his moral obliquities that made him wish heartily he had never tried to extract the twopence or threepence out of her; had the money expended been her own she could not have laid it out to better advantage. She thought there was no one in the

world like her master, and she had good reason for thinking so.

When under-master in another town he had lodged with her; she had then been a widow for upwards of seven years, and had found it a hard struggle to make ends meet. Her only daughter inherited the father's complaint—consumption; and when Edward Martyn first went to them he found things at a very low ebb. He it was who procured delicacies to tempt the invalid's appetite, who paid for her out of his slender allowance to go to a convalescent home, and who, when the end came, took the burden and responsibility of the funeral arrangements. Well might the mother think that there never could be another as good and kind as he; and when he asked her if she would like to give up her house and go to Bury-cum-Thorpe with him as his housekeeper, she wept tears of joy; the prospect seemed as a glimpse of the heavenly country.

Many would have been surprised had they heard the jokes that passed between the reserved, quiet head-master and his housekeeper; for Peggy's quaint speeches were a source of never-ending amusement to him.

As Edward Martyn stood contemplating the partially deserted hives, and pulling his beard abstractedly, he heard voices on the other side of the wall, and caught the sound of his own name uttered in a young—he was sure it was young—happy voice.

'Indeed,' it said, 'I never spoke to Mr Martyn in my life; and if he is poky, as you call him, he's far cleverer than any one in the town; and it's better to be clever and shy than showy and have nothing in you; and I'—

The voice died away in the distance; but the head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School stood as in a dream: bees, hives, swarms all forgotten; only the voice of a girl pleading his cause remembered. Who was she? Where did she live? What was she like? These questions passed rapidly through his mind, and for the first time he wished that the garden-wall had been low enough to see over.

'So they think I'm poky—do they! But *she* said I was clever; and—yes, I fear I am shy and awkward;' and he heaved a sigh.

The sound of the dinner-gong recalled him to himself, and he hastened down the garden to his lonely meal.

During the evening, whilst busy correcting exercises, a note came for him, as follows:

'SYCAMORE COTTAGE, CHESTNUT LANE,
'BURY-CUM-THORPE.

'DEAR SIR,—A swarm of bees has taken possession of our pear-tree; and my father, knowing that you keep them, wonders if you have lost any. If so, will you be good enough to come and take them, as we are not adepts at "bee-handling"?—Yours truly,

'DOROTHY ADLINGTON.'

He jumped up, exclaiming, 'My swarm! No doubt about it.' And, taking with him his head-net and face-cover, a hive, and one or two other necessary articles for capturing bees, he set off.

He knew Mr Adlington slightly, having met him on committees, and had always regarded him as one of the most intellectual and cultured men of the town. He had retired from business—that of an engineer—some years ago, on account of failing eyesight, and now lived on a modest little income, devoting himself to literary and scientific pursuits. His wife had died soon after the birth of their only child, and he had never married again. It would have been difficult to find a more devoted couple than him and his daughter Dorothy, whom he had imbued with a like enthusiasm for knowledge as himself.

The cottage in which they lived was a long, low, white one, covered with honeysuckle and jasmine; and the rambling old garden contained a wealth of roses which would have delighted the heart of an exhibitor. Two large sycamore-trees stood well back, affording a cool shelter on the hottest day.

As Mr Martyn drew near the house he began to wish he had secured his bees and was safely away. Just as his hand was on the door-bell he heard a voice exclaim triumphantly:

'They *are* Mr Martyn's, father; here he is!' and a vision of white-and-blue appeared from a hidden seat in the garden, followed by Mr Adlington.

'Good-evening, Mr Martyn. Allow me to introduce my daughter Dorothy to you.'

The head-master bowed confusedly to the girl, who extended her hand in a pretty, frank fashion. He would have given much then not to have felt shy or awkward.

'Then the bees are yours, Mr Martyn?'

'I hope so. I lost a beautiful swarm this morning between eleven and twelve.'

'Just when you were fast in school with those tiresome boys,' said Dorothy, laughingly. 'How vexed you must have been!'

'I own candidly my temper was not of the sweetest as I watched them flying over my garden wall,' he answered, smiling too; 'but I am in luck's way if I get them after all.'

'What fun to see them taken!'

'It depends upon their behaviour whether it is fun, my dear,' said her father.

A low buzzing sound and a few stray bees reminded them that they were nearing the proximity of the swarm; and Mr Martyn's long experience warned him that they were evidently angry. Seeing this, he advised Miss Adlington and her father to move to a safe distance.

A ladder having been procured, the master stepped quietly up, and, after much coaxing and persuasion, secured his swarm, but not without several nasty stings on hands and neck.

Miss Adlington, on seeing these, insisted on his going into the house, in order that the stings might be extracted and a little ammonia applied.

For the first time in his life since he was a boy, Edward Martyn found himself submitting willingly to the ministrations of a woman; and that woman—a girl whose blue eyes, shaded by long lashes, and hair that fell in natural waves on her broad brow, combined with her soft and gentle touch—had made the shy, stiff head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School wish—feel—oh! he hardly knew what, a something new and strange.

After the application of the remedy he lingered on in a sort of awkward way, as though wanting an excuse to stay.

Dorothy, with her quick perception, soon put him at ease; and before many minutes had elapsed her father and he were busily discussing the latest scientific problem over a cup of coffee and a cigar.

When he returned home, at 11.30, Mrs Peggy looked at him in mild surprise. She had never known him out so late since they came to Bury-cum-Thorpe.

'Yes, sir,' she replied, in answer to some remark he made about being rather late—'yes, sir, I was getting a bit nervous-like, you being so reg'lar in your habits. I was afraid something had happened you.'

'Oh no! only something pleasant. I have secured my lost bees.'

'That's a good thing. It's to be hoped the creatures 'll have more sense next time than swarm in the middle of school-time.'

'Oh, I don't mind. I'm rather glad they did;' and as he said this he looked at the red marks on his hands, and felt again the touch of soft white fingers.

'Rather glad they did!' Had she heard aright? He must be a bit sleepy and tired, and hardly knew what he was saying.

On the contrary, he had never been so wide awake in his life; and had his housekeeper seen him, an hour later, lay in his drawer a sweet-scented white rose, which he had picked up as it fell from Dorothy Adlington's waist, she would have pronounced him neither sleepy nor tired, but 'gone a bit in his 'ead, through overwork an' the worry of them tiresome boys, as is enough to turn anybody's brain.'

BAMBOROUGH.

By SARAH WILSON.



SIR THOMAS MALORY tells us in his *Morte d'Arthur* (printed by Caxton) that there were two opinions in his day as to the identity of the Garde Joyeuse of Sir Lancelot du Lake, for whereas some men said it was Bamborough, others said it was Alnwick; and in later times Berwick-upon-Tweed has also been deemed likely to have been the storied stronghold. For various geographical and topographical reasons, it has now come to be conceded they were correct who said it was Bamborough. Quite recently, in an examination of an ancient cemetery about three hundred yards south of Bamborough Castle, marked Danish on the Ordnance map, an older one was found below it, at a depth of several feet, having interments within a circle of boulder-stones made in the ancient British manner—the same as that in which Bronwen the Fair was buried on the banks of the Alaw. This proof of ancient British occupation gives us leave to believe that there was an ancient British stronghold on the rock where the castle now stands, to which Sir Lancelot may have brought King Arthur's queen when he rescued her from the burning at Carlisle; and that it may have been to the plain below its walls that the king brought his warriors when he followed in pursuit of the fugitives. We may picture to ourselves the beauty of Guinevere, the

curious needlecraft on her robes, the grace and strength of her steed, the king's broken heart, the repentance of Sir Lancelot, and the grimness of accusing Sir Mordred. There is the same North Sea, now as then swaying, billowing, surging, incoming and outgoing, sometimes blue and flecked with white as with seagulls' wings, sometimes greenish-gray with crowns of creamy foam scattered all over it, and oftener lead-colour and in wild commotion; there is the group of black islands close by that we call the Farne Islands; there are the sandhills along the shore with their light sprinkling of hard grasses; the low-lying shelving rocks that jut out into the waters here and there; and the distant hazy crags and hills—now as then. Only, nearly eight centuries ago the great basaltic steep was capped with a new, strong castle, which still looks down and out upon the older features of its surroundings.

Before this Norman fortress was built there was another on the same grand site that was the residence of the Anglian kings in the days of the Heptarchy. One of these monarchs, Ida, named it Bebbanburgh in honour of his queen, Bebba. Another, Oswald, sent to Scotland for a missionary to convert his subjects to Christianity. A third, Ceolwulf, resigned his crown to retire to the monastery founded on the island of Lindisfarne by this missionary Aidan. The Danes, too, occupied Bamborough for a time. We have

special memory of Sigtryg, who married the sister of Athelstan and afterwards discarded her, a change in his affections which led to the ultimate annexation of Northumbria as well as Bamborough to Athelstan's dominions.

The Norman castle we now see was described by Hoveden in the twelfth century as containing not more than two or three acres of ground; and on the Ordnance map of our own times it is corroboratively set down as but little over three acres in extent. There is a tall square central keep, as in the case of the Tower of London, with a deep well in it, and a space around it enclosed by a high and strong wall, along which are various towers and ranges of apartments. After many incidents of fortune in the course of centuries—King David of Scotland besieged it in 1138, and Archibald Douglas two centuries later—and having been the temporary residence of Queens Philippa and Margaret of Anjou successively, and been bombarded by the Earl of Warwick in 1464, the ancient structure came into the hands of Bishop Crewe, who in 1722, by will, converted it into a charitable institution, where shipwrecked mariners, poor people, children, and invalids all received help of the different kinds they required. Within the last few years it has been purchased by Lord Armstrong, who is now making roads and walks around it, as well as rearrangements within the walls. In Hoveden's day there was but one hollow road into it, which fact, together with its altitude on the steep rock, doubtless helped to maintain its impregnability. As the new works are in course of progress it can only be said of them that there is no one who knows what end they will have; but it may be mentioned that every care appears to be taken to preserve the honour and interest of the majestic stronghold. Documentary evidence has been preserved which informs us that two Welsh chieftains were kept prisoners in this fortress for more than six years. They had taken possession of some of the castles of Edward the First in Wales, and when captured were placed in the Tower of London, and thence transferred to Bamborough, whence they were taken back to London in 1296 in a dying condition. As late as 1547, in describing the expedition of the Duke of Somerset to Scotland, William Patten mentions the strength and inaccessibility of the castle, and adds that he had heard it was called in Arthur's days Joyous Garde.

The village is spread out on the inland side of the castle, at some little distance from it. In the centre is a long plantation or grove; on either side is a row of one-storied cottages interspersed with larger houses and two or three inns; at the farther end is the pale-gray church standing in a large churchyard. Over the two lines of houses so far apart, with the castle on the high rock at one end of them, the ancient cruciform church at the other, and the grove in the centre, there

abides a charm of association with the memory of two maidens, Dorothy Forster and Grace Darling. There is no railway station nearer than Lucker, no harbour nearer than North Sunderland; therefore there are no disturbing or effacing influences, and the remembrance of the leading incidents in their lives remains in the village like continuing sunshine. The garden of the square stone house in which Dorothy Forster lived adjoins the churchyard. Every one lingers at the gate to note the stone porch, the low threshold, the square windows, and double side-gables of the house. Every one likes to think of her passing in and out of the doorway with her heart as full of courage and daring whilst she matured her plan for the liberation of her brother, as was Grace Darling's on the night of the great storm and shipwreck with which her equally-regarded name is associated. Below the church in a dim crypt is the burying-place of the Forster family, which everybody should see; and in the church still hangs a piece or two of armour once worn by a member of the same race. In the south transept of the church is the first stone effigy of Grace Darling, or Grace Horsley Darling, to give her name in full. The sea-winds played so much havoc in the way of disintegrating the sandstone of which this effigy is wrought, as it lay under its canopy on the monument in the churchyard, that it has been thought well to replace it there with a facsimile of more enduring hardness, and this one has been brought into the church for preservation. Out in the churchyard, surrounded by an iron railing, is the public monument to the memory of the lighthouse-keeper's daughter. The new effigy is made from a hard stone selected by Lord Armstrong from the hills on his Crag-side estate. The heroine reposes at full length on a mattress with an oar by her side, her head raised on a cushion, and her hands closed in prayer. About five years ago the winds again wrecked this memorial, which has now been placed in repair once more. The heroine is buried near her father, among other kindred, under the grasses, a few paces away. The cottage in which she was born is close at hand.

There are ancient British camps in the neighbourhood at Chester Hill, Easington, and Spindleston, all of which are thought to have been subsequently used by Roman legions. Spindleston, which commands fine views of Holy Island, Kyloe Crag, and the Cheviot Hills, has, in addition, a legend, put into verse in 1320, to the effect that the daughter of one of the kings of Bamborough, having been transformed by her stepmother into a laidley worm, or dragon, lived in a cavern here, and roamed the country by night. Her brother heard of the cruel enchantment, built a ship with masts of rowan-wood, and sailed to her deliverance. He landed with his followers on Budle Sands, and

kissed his sister thrice; whereupon she resumed her natural form, and the stepmother became a toad, and retired to the bottom of a well in one of the towers of the castle. There is a Roman way, as well as a pilgrims' road; and there are fragments of a monastery of preaching friars, and various other objects of minor interest; but the attraction of the Farne Islands dotting the sea eastwards exceeds them all.

They attracted St Cuthbert more than twelve hundred years ago, for he took up his abode upon the one nearest to the shore; and in the intervening centuries there have been many attempts to bring them within the range of usefulness to mankind. There was a strong and stark peel-tower built in old times upon the one St Cuthbert had thus distinguished, which is but little more than a mile out at sea from Bamborough; and a chapel was also built upon it in some long-past day, in connection probably with a small priory which the Durham ecclesiastical authorities established in it, both of which erections have been repaired from time to time and are still standing; and in these later days lighthouses have been built upon two of the islands about three miles apart, known as the Near Light and the Far Light. Those who count the islands differ in their opinion of their number on account of high tides completely covering many of the smaller ones, and very low tides exposing a few more than are generally visible. Twenty-eight are set down in the Ordnance Survey. There is sufficient grass growing on some of them to warrant the shipment of a cow or 'beast' to them occasionally. A sail out to them is an event long to be remembered. It is a pleasure to see Grace Darling's little sanctuary as it is passed by in ascending the winding stair of the lighthouse on the Longstone to attain the glass-covered chamber on the summit, from which the brilliant light shines forth that is so much to all at sea within its influence, and to note the admirable cleanliness and neatness that prevail in all the arrangements. On attempting to land on the slippery rocks of some of the other islands one is almost deterred by the cries and flappings of wings of myriads of sea-birds, for they are the breeding-places of cormorants, eider-ducks, puffins, guillemots, and gulls of every description. Some years ago the islands were let like a farm for the sake of the kelp, wild-fowl, feathers, and the few seals that were found upon them, at the small rental of £16 per annum; but now they are cared for by an association, and no one is granted permission to visit them till he has signed an undertaking not to remove any of the eggs that are to be seen on all sides, or otherwise molest the feathered inhabitants. There are sometimes eighteen eggs in the nest of an eider duck; recently a heron was observed to build a nest four feet high on the island called Wide-opens; and the watchers of the association take note, among other things, of two pairs of roseate terns that

neither increase in number nor leave the islands altogether.

There was a great castle on the coast a few miles to the north of Bamborough, at Berwick-on-Tweed (the railway station now stands on its site); and another at Dunstanborough, a few miles to the south of it. This, though in frayed ruins, is still of considerable consequence, for the great gatehouse, that was eventually made into a keep, with its two round towers pierced with arrow-slits below and double-lights in the next story and single-lights still higher, its cavernous archway, stone vaulted and grooved for a portcullis, and five carved corbels that carried some projecting defence above, is yet remaining. The curtain-wall enclosed about ten acres. The south side of it had four towers, one of which is still known as the Margaret Tower in remembrance of the deeds done in the Wars of the Roses, when the castle changed ownership five times with the varying fortunes of the rival parties. Another tall tower with walls six feet thick still keeps guard over the remains and over the great deep chasm in the basaltic rock in which the sea boils up and rumbles portentously, called the Rumbling Churn. But there is historical mention of a third castle of which no traces have hitherto been discovered. This is the fortress built by William Rufus near Bamborough, when he found he could not reduce that stronghold. It is spoken of as Malvoisin, as one of those evil neighbours that Norman warfare devised for a means of vanquishing foes who would not yield to less extreme measures. Philologists have made the interesting suggestion that perhaps the name of this structure is preserved in the adjacent township of Mousen.

And so it has come to pass that Bamborough is encrusted with traditions that the storms of more than a thousand years have not swept away. In addition to the glamour arising from Queen Guinevere's residence in it, some claim for it the romance of having been the resting-place of the 'gay-beseen' lady, the fair Isoud, when Sir Tristram conducted her from her home. These rumours may be only the imaginings of those troubadours and trouvères who could tell likewise of the mysterious hand rising out of the unknown mere to grasp King Arthur's sword, and of other mystic details of his passing. The Anglo-Saxon transactions are, however, of more tangible authenticity. The succession of kings and bishops and the chief events in their lives are recorded sometimes by contemporary writers, and at others by historians at no great interval of time from their day. We need no grain of salt in the matter of Aidan's preaching and persuading, of St Cuthbert's ascetic meditations on the Farne Islands for nine years, of the woeful ending of King Oswald's encounter with the pagan Penda, or of the careful conservation of his head and arm by the monks of Lindisfarne in the same reliquary that held the remains of St Cuthbert; nor need we hesitate to accept the

accounts of the various sieges the castle withstood, from the old, old time when it was only timbered, till it was given up to Athelstan in 924. We may receive without question the statement that the wife of Robert de Mowbray, the third Earl of Northumberland, held the castle against William Rufus till her husband was brought before its walls with the threat that his eyes should be put out unless she surrendered; that it was Henry the Second who built the keep we now see about 1164; that Edward the Third's queen, Philippa, was in residence in it in 1333, and Margaret of Anjou in 1462; and that the Earl of Warwick laid siege to it in 1464 with the terrible menace that if the besieged did not deliver up the 'Jewel' whole and unbroken with ordnance it should cost the head of the chieftain, Sir Ralph Grey, as well as the head of a lesser personage for every gun-shot that was fired. Then it was that the stones of the walls flew into the sea as the cannonade went

on, and one of the guns, named Dysion (they seem to have been named in those days) sent destruction into Sir Ralph's chamber, till at last the castle was won and the brave defender taken and executed at Doncaster. Its later history is well known. It is understood it did not recover from this catastrophe, and Sir John Forster, the constable in the reign of Elizabeth, allowed it to fall into complete ruin. It was then purchased by Bishop Crewe; and subsequently restored by one of his trustees, Archdeacon Sharp, in 1758. The castle sits as on a throne, and the bravery of the two maidens, Dorothy Forster and Grace Darling, that glorifies the quiet village, seems but the due outcome of the courage of the unrecorded generations that so often defended it.

Whether the new railway now in course of construction at North Sunderland will affect this alluring environment of romance and history remains to be proved.

THE MURUTS OF NORTH BORNEO.



HERE are many scientific problems awaiting solution in the great island of Borneo, not the least among them being the origin and history of the races inhabiting the country, from the war-loving, head-hunting Sea-

Dyak down to that mysterious race the Ukits, who are said to be houseless and clothesless, who neither hunt nor till the ground, but follow the trail of the wild-pig and live on the roots which they grub out of the ground, robbing the very swine of the fruit of their researches. It is not the object of this present writer to attempt the solution of the question, but rather to add to the general stock of knowledge by describing what he knows of the Muruts of North Borneo, after a residence of two years among them.

The Muruts inhabit the basin of the Padas River—the chief tributary of which is the Pagalan—rising probably in Kinabalu, the highest mountain in Borneo (attaining to the respectable height of some thirteen thousand feet), and flowing south until it joins the main stream at Sapong. The basin of the Pagalan consists of a great valley, of which the average width is ten miles, while it is probably a hundred miles long. Two ranges of hills, rising in places to the height of four thousand feet, and covered to the very summit with dense vegetation, enclose this plain. The Pagalan being unnavigable even for the smallest *prahus*, this huge plain is at present cut off from the coast; the only communication being by means of native tracks, and all goods having to be transported on men's backs. Langland grass—coarse, and reaching to the height of a man's shoulders—covers the plain, which, together with the neighbouring jungle, shelters and feeds game of various kinds: the

tombado or wild-ox, several varieties of deer, the wild-pig, the honey-bear, the jungle-fowl, four or five kinds of pigeon; and, finally, snipe, golden-plover, and duck in their season. The soil is of excellent quality, as is shown by the small patches on which rice is cultivated by the Muruts, where the minimum of labour and the crudest of appliances and skill return a bounteous harvest. Tobacco is grown, and flourishes even with native ideas, which simply consist of putting the seed in the ground; while there is every indication, from the small amount of Arabian coffee planted, that much success would attend its cultivation on a large scale. Of European products, lettuce, tomatoes, and kidney-beans have been grown with little trouble. The temperature of this tableland, which is between one thousand and two thousand feet above the sea-level, is very different from that of Labuan or Sandakan, on the coast. The early morning and the evening are cold—often too cold for one resident any length of time in the tropics to sit out on the veranda—while the heat of mid-day is often tempered by a cool breeze. The rainfall is not excessive, and is well distributed over the various months of the year. Finally, the country is healthy for any European who is able to live in the tropics. The British North Borneo Company possesses here a tract of land of the greatest value, which will undoubtedly draw to itself the attention of planters as soon as they open it up by making a good, quick line of communication with the coast at its nearest point.

The Muruts are a race small in stature, light-brown in complexion (when one arrives at the skin with which Nature endowed them), with jet-black hair; in many cases the nose is flat and the stomach protuberant. From the fact that there

appear to be few old men and women among them, we may conclude that they are short-lived; nor is this to be wondered at when we consider their mode of life. In the first place, they pluck out their eyelashes, a frequent cause of inflammation of the eye and of subsequent blindness; and they grind down their teeth to the gums, thus preventing proper mastication. Their food consists chiefly of rice, to which they add as dainties coarse salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, pumpkins, the heart of the coco-nut palm, of the sago palm, and of other trees, and vegetables culled in the jungle. There is practically no attempt made to grow vegetables, in spite of the luxuriant produce they give with little trouble. On festive occasions, such as funerals, the Muruts kill a goat, a pig, or a buffalo, and eat the flesh cooked in the blood. They almost invariably drink the warm liquor in which their rice or meat is cooked. It is sad to relate that they never lose an opportunity of eating animals that have died a natural death, and often when they are in an advanced stage of decomposition; in fact, one of their greatest luxuries is fish or buffalo-meat kept in a bamboo until the stench of it is unbearable to Europeans. When hard pressed for food they eat the tapioca-root and raw sago. Of intoxicating liquors they make three kinds from rice: one fairly harmless, thick with pounded rice, called *lelutow*; another, the common drink of the Murut, *tapei*; a third, a kind of refined *tapei*, a clear, heady liquor, blessed with the name *tinagei*. A drinking-party of Muruts is a sight never to be forgotten. The house reeking with filth and *tapei*; the rows of blackened human heads grinning down on the drinkers; the huge jars, each surrounded with a small crowd of drunken or expectant Muruts; the relaxed forms of men and women lying stupefied on the floor, amidst all the filth; the children, excited by liquor, clanging the gongs in monotonous rhythm—all contribute to the horror of a scene degrading to mankind. Yet there is a rude etiquette even here. *Tapei* is drunk from the large jars in which it is made. A leaf pierced with holes is placed over the mouth of the jar. Through this leaf a slender bamboo pipe passes, reaching nearly to the bottom of the jar. The perforated leaf is filled with water, which takes the place of the liquid sucked up the bamboo by the drinker. The etiquette of drinking is as follows: The owner of the jar of *tapei* asks the most important man present to drink, an invitation which is cordially accepted. The host then fills the leaf with water, takes a little suck to see that the tube is working properly, and then sits down to entertain his guest while he drinks. It is his duty to see that his guest does not pull up the tube, as the strongest liquor is at the bottom of the jar; and the height of politeness is to firmly press down the tube if the guest tries to escape drunkenness by avoiding the strong liquor below. A small basin is placed above the

jar, in which are cut lemons, salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, and other things calculated to excite thirst. When the guest has finished his drink he signifies the same by putting his finger on the leaf, and showing the tip of it to his host. If the finger is dry, the host tests the leaf himself, poking his fingers into the crevices to try and find a little moisture. Should he discover enough to wet the tip of his finger, the guest must continue drinking. On completely emptying the leaf of water, the guest must in turn fill up the leaf for his host, must guard the tube jealously, and must see that he drinks until the leaf is dry. There are often some twenty to thirty jars broached on such an occasion, and some hundred to two hundred people are present. The drinking-bout usually lasts three days.

The general characteristic of the Murut is lethargy, physical and mental. It is with the greatest difficulty that he can be persuaded to do any work, and that work will be done in the most slovenly and slipshod fashion. His wife seeks his food, cooks it, and sets it before him. He is obliged to help in making the rice-field; but, in this case even, he takes care that his wife and children do more than their fair share of the work. Cowardice is one of his failings, even to the extent of taking the heads of women and children, and then boasting of the exploit. Occasionally the Murut hunts or fishes; but in both cases his success is indifferent, owing to his laziness and want of skill. The wickerwork traps that he sets in running streams for fish show some invention, and are of rather intricate construction. Until the advent of the European officer, it was the custom to set spring-traps for game, shooting a spear with such force as to kill a deer. The position of these traps was known to all the inhabitants of the village near where they were set; but strangers were often killed by them. Fortunately they are now forbidden by law, and a heavy fine is incurred by anybody setting them; but one who is fond of sport has still to be wary, as it is hard to kill the custom. The commonest way of killing the deer now is by fixing stout nets at one end of a wood, and beating the wood by men and dogs in the direction of the nets. The *coup de grâce* is given with the hunting-spear. The blowpipe with its poisoned arrows is also used by the Murut; but it is a clumsy weapon at the best, as the game does not die at once when hit, but is sometimes as long as half-an-hour in succumbing, and consequently in most cases easily escapes its hunter.

At one time the valley of the Pagalan must have been thickly inhabited, for wherever one goes one sees the evidences of former cultivation; but the population is now sparse, owing probably to two causes—disease and head-hunting. Of the former we speak shortly hereafter; of the latter we can only say that, before the British North Borneo Company sent an officer to administer the

district, no one was safe either in his home, his rice-field, or on a journey. To this day, though there is peace in the land, no Murut thinks of going as far as his field without taking his weapons with him. Of these, the defensive include a coat and helmet of deer or buffalo hide, and a square shield of the same material; the offensive, the spear, long and short, the blowpipe, and the parang, a short, heavy, cutting weapon, whose handle and scabbard are ornamented with tufts of human hair. In fighting, the two opponents squat on their haunches behind their shields, peeping occasionally round the corner to watch the tactics of the foe. Should one or the other uncover himself, he would be immediately fired at with the blowpipe. Every opportunity is taken to approach the enemy. In days gone by a fight of this kind frequently lasted till night-time, as each advanced or retired with the utmost caution. If a man were killed the victors made a great feast, buffaloes were slaughtered, and the village to a man was drunk for the next three days; the dead man was cut up by his foes, every one of his bones being treasured, carefully dried and smoked, and finally hung up in the chief's house. It was customary to file the teeth of a man when he got his first head; but as the government has made heads scarce, the teeth are now filed on any great drinking occasion, especially on one held in connection with the heads they already possess. People who are killed in an *amok* are cut up in the same way as those who lose their life in a fight. Villages are often protected by placing in the ground among the grass and brushwood sharpened bamboos. These primitive caltrops are very effective. People who die a natural death are generally doubled up and fitted into a jar, which in former days was sealed up, and sometimes kept in the dwelling-room for a year before being buried in graves under the house or quite close to it. These graves are ornamented in a rough fashion, the only attempt at art that a Murut makes; the finials of the square earthen grave being frequently moulded into the shape of a man's head, with a pipe in his mouth; a palm-leaf (*atap*) roofed hut is built over the grave, the gables being adorned with wooden projections resembling a pair of buffalo horns; the woodwork is painted with wavy lines of red and black, wooden representations of birds and men are placed on the posts of the fence surrounding the grave, while the whole is bedecked with flags of varied hues. On the grave itself are placed a bowl of water, two or three sticks of sugar-cane, and a few vegetables, apparently in the hope that the ghost will find food, and so be content in his new quarters, and will not disturb the living by appearing in his old home.

It is difficult to get at the belief of the Muruts with regard to their dead; but it is certain that they recognise a body and a soul, and have an

idea that the body dies and is utterly destroyed, but that the soul (or *ambiro-o*, as they call it) may reappear in the form of a ghost. These ghosts are accounted active agents in causing illness and unlucky dreams; and the medical treatment of the Murut doctors consists in making every effort to dislodge them from the patient. An animal is slaughtered, and the sick man is bedaubed with the blood, gongs are violently beaten, sudden shouts are raised, and the bulbous roots of a plant which emits a particularly foul and suffocating smell are burnt, in the hope of driving away the ghost. In answer to inquiries concerning the Murut view of the future state of the departed, some have declared that the *ambiro-o* live on the top of Kinabalu, a mountain seen from all parts of their country. The word *pinagaringgan* is used for the good spirit, or the place in which the good spirit dwells; while *kinapoonan* designates the evil spirit or his home. This fact shows the lethargy of the mind of the Murut; he does not take the trouble to distinguish between the person and the abode of the spirit; and when pushed for an answer to such questions, he replies that he does not know, that he has not been there to see, and he seems quite content with his ignorance. In taking an oath he calls on *pinagaringgan* to witness, and prays for destruction and the foulest ill-treatment to be meted out to himself, and especially to his female relatives, murrain on his buffaloes, and blight on his rice-crops, should he break his plighted troth. To make this oath binding blood must be shed; a fowl, goat, cow, or buffalo being killed, according to the importance of the occasion, of which the blood is poured upon a stone, the stone being afterwards solemnly buried in the earth, while both parties to the oath punctuate each sentence with a blow struck by a *parang* on a piece of wood. It may be remarked that even at the moment of taking an oath, an event which a Murut looks upon as supremely important, the two parties swearing vie with each other in calling down the vilest treatment imaginable upon their mothers, wives, and children should they be false to their plight, and each filthy remark is received with loud laughter and evident appreciation by the assembled natives.

The diseases of the Muruts are chiefly such as follow dirty habits. Skin diseases and diseases of the eye are common; while malarial fever and dysentery are not infrequent. Some twenty years ago an epidemic of smallpox carried off a great part of the population. The natives were terrified; many fled to the jungle, but their dread foe followed them even there, and at last they resorted to the plan of immediately putting to death any one infected with the disease. So great was the impression made that even lately, when a vaccination officer was sent up, the natives came in crowds to submit to an operation of which they knew nothing, but which they readily

believed, on the white man's word, would be efficacious in preventing their suffering from such an epidemic again.

The Muruts are nominally polygamists; but in practice each man has but one wife, the exceptions being few and mostly confined to the chiefs. The price of a wife is regulated by the price of her mother; one hundred Mexican dollars or its equivalent in buffaloes or jars being commonly paid to the father. It may be mentioned, for the sake of the uninitiated, that in Borneo various kinds of large earthenware jars, standing two and three feet high, and in many cases of great antiquity, are highly prized. To the inhabitants of Borneo they are what pictures or *objets d'art* are to us.

This race of people has several kinds of musical instruments, both wind and stringed. Of the former, the two most curious are a nose-flute, resembling our flute in all points, but which is played by breathing into it through the nostrils instead of with the mouth, the notes produced being very soft and pleasant; and the mouth-organ, made of the hard shell of a pumpkin-like

vegetable, into which are let bamboos pierced with holes at various heights, to act as organ-pipes. Of the stringed instruments, one is a rough kind of guitar, while another, made of bamboo, is cylindrical in shape, and the strings, which are supported by bridges, are strips of bamboo raised from the body of the instrument.

Lastly, the language of the Muruts has a copious vocabulary, while its inflections are bewildering, everybody seeming to the novice to inflect as he or she pleases. As might be expected, it is almost entirely wanting in words expressing abstract thought, such terms as 'love' and 'reverence' being unknown, the nearest equivalents being 'want' and 'fear' respectively. Owing to the want of intercommunication in the past, nearly every village has its own dialect. Missionaries are now at work among them, and it is to be hoped that one of the good results of their presence will be the preservation of this language, which is almost sure to disappear before Malay, a beautiful tongue spoken even at this present time by many Muruts.

LOUIS NAPOLEON AT BOULOGNE—1840.

By ONE WHO WAS THERE.



THE recent manifesto of a new claimant for the empire of the Bonapartes brings vividly before me an interesting recollection of my early youth.

It was in the August of 1840, when Prince Louis Napoleon (later on, for eighteen years, the Emperor Napoleon III.) made his premature and ill-advised landing at Wimereux, a village some few miles from Boulogne-sur-Mer. Viewed in the light of after-events, the Prince's attempt was not altogether so foolhardy and desperate as it appeared at the moment; but it certainly did turn out to be a very unfortunate affair indeed.

We were passing the summer holidays at Boulogne, at a corner house on the Place d'Armes, in the old Haute Ville, surrounded by its venerable and picturesque ramparts. At a very early hour on the morning of the 6th of August we were surprised by a visit from a French friend, who, with great excitement, made the startling announcement, '*On vient de battre la Générale.*' With our somewhat limited knowledge of the French language we naturally imagined that some general officer and his troops had been defeated; but, on a further explanation, it appeared that *la Générale* was the mustering call to arms for the National Guard, of which every French citizen is a member. And, sure enough, a body of soldiers, with drummers beating their inspiring charge, were at the very moment parading the streets.

'Oh! then and there was hurrying to and fro.' Workmen left their tasks, tradesmen emerged from their shops, eagerly equipping themselves in the regulation uniform; and one and all hastened to the appointed place of rendezvous.

Prince Louis Napoleon, accompanied by General Montholon, and with about fifty followers, had, it appeared, landed at an early hour that morning at the village of Wimereux, and had at once marched to the Column of the Grande Armée on the heights of Boulogne, where he had authoritatively summoned the soldiers in the neighbouring barracks to join his standard. This the soldiers had prudently and decidedly refused to do; and, after some parleying and skirmishing, the Prince and his followers, recognising the utter hopelessness of their position, had made their way to the seashore in order to re-embark. This was, however, prevented by the zeal of the then royalist Boulognese, and the Prince was taken prisoner on the sands of the seaside.

On hearing of these exciting events, three of us youngsters, disregarding the anxious entreaties of our French governess in charge (who was somewhat in the perplexing position of the prudent hen with the adventurous ducklings), started off and made our way down to the Port, to see for ourselves what was happening. Boulogne being a very favourite bathing-resort, and the Port being a long, tedious walk on a hot summer morning, a number of miniature omnibuses plied between the corner of the Rue de l'Écu and the

Établissement des Bains at the farther extremity of the Port, to convey intending bathers from the town to the regular bathing-machines that awaited them. There were several rival companies (or *concurrences des bains*), each provided with its own omnibus. It was one of these vehicles, belonging to Messieurs Sauvage et Caboche, that had been hastily selected as a conveyance for the captive Prince, a square little omnibus, surrounded with tarpaulin curtains looped back on either side. In this improvised state carriage, surrounded by armed soldiers, and escorted by half the population of the town, the future emperor was conveyed a prisoner along the Port and the Rue de l'Écu, up the Grande Rue to the Château entrenched behind the ramparts of the Haute Ville. We daring young folks arrived upon the Port just in time to take part in the motley procession. Our sympathies, I may explain, were entirely on the side of the captive Prince; so much so that my brother, with the reckless daring of an English schoolboy, shouted out, in the very middle of the Grande Rue (perhaps the only voice amid that vast concourse that ventured to raise the cry upon that occasion), '*Vive l'Empereur!*' He was at once set upon by an indignant French youth, who clutched him by the throat, addressing him by the opprobrious epithet of '*Cochon Anglais!*' With some difficulty we succeeded in tearing them apart before any mischief had been done, and the small affray passed unnoticed in the confusion of the hurrying crowd.

When at last the place of destination was reached, the pressure of the eager multitude became intolerable. As usual in a crowd—especially in France—the fair element was not wanting; and I well remember our amusement at hearing some over-pushed Frenchman, forgetting his own individual curiosity and the proverbial gallantry of his countrymen, exclaim with great indignation against the women in his vicinity, '*Les femmes sont bien curieuses dans ce pays-ci!*' As the bathing-carriage was about to pass within the archway leading to the Château, we caught a glimpse (through an opening between the curtains of the carriage) of the calm, pale face and dark, thoughtful eyes of the captive Prince as he glanced towards the prison before him. The carriage entered in, and the ponderous gates were closed; the soldiers mounted guard, and the crowd slowly dispersed. For some days the Prince was detained in the Château; then one night we were excited to observe, from the windows of our house, a troop of horsemen waiting in the Place d'Armes; and the next news announced that Prince Napoleon had been conveyed to the prison at Ham, where he remained closely confined for the space of five years—years that were not wasted, but passed in earnest study and reflection, from which he reaped the benefit in his future career.

Immediately after the departure of the prisoner Prince, the loyalty of the Boulognese was duly

rewarded by a visit from the king, Louis Philippe, and his family. Great enthusiasm prevailed; the whole town was a scene of triumph and festivity. Once again the Grande Rue was thronged to witness another, but very different, procession. Instead of the closely-guarded captive in the bathing-carriage, the king, accompanied by his gallant sons, rode on horseback, surrounded by a military escort and crowds of cheering spectators, while the royal princesses followed in open carriages, dispensing smiles and bows to all around. It was altogether a very triumphant and gorgeous affair, which literally fulfilled the description in the old song:

The king of France, with twenty thousand men,
Marched up the hill, and then marched down again.

Alas for the futility of human hopes and the constancy of popular favour! Eight years after these triumphal proceedings the king, Louis Philippe, under the *alias* of Mr Smith, was escaping from Paris, to end his days in exile; and four years later the Prisoner of Ham was reigning at the Tuileries as the Emperor Napoleon III. Eighteen years afterwards came the disaster of Sedan and the collapse of the Second Empire. What further development the future may have in store time alone can tell.

A S E A S C A P E.

OVER the waters' face a darkness falls,
Out on the trackless race where sea-bird calls,
Rolling with reckless grace, labours and hauls
A black-hulled ship.

Dark are her spars and sails. A wind on high,
Through rigging whistling, wails, and, sighing by,
Whispers strange goblin tales with long-drawn sigh
And trembling lip.

From glistening rail to truck, each rope and shroud
Rakes dim against the ruck of banked cloud;
A burst of sunlight struck o'er waves dark-browed
Rainbows the scud.

Athwart the plunging bows the breakers sweep,
The heaving swell endows with life her leap—
With gurgling rush she ploughs her scuppers deep
Beneath the flood.

Sullen in western sky, wind-racked and gray,
The sun sinks down to die and fades a day;
The black-hulled ship drives by on lonesome way
Into the night.

Afar on every side on urgent rein
The white sea-horses ride with tossing mane,
Fast creeps the eventide o'er watery plain
And pales the light.

J. J. S.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



STALKING WILD GOATS.

THERE is a sport to be enjoyed in some few remote parts of Scotland which yields to none that can be found in the kingdom in its possibilities of adventure and its picturesqueness. Stalking wild goats requires the same hunting craft as deerstalking, and the ground to be traversed before a satisfactory chance of a shot can be obtained is quite as difficult and admits as many thrilling episodes as the mountain heights on which the ibex and the chamois hold their court. So highly did wild-goat shooting appeal to Colquhoun, the well-known author of *The Moor and the Loch*, that he seriously suggested the introduction in suitable places of a stock of wild goats, which he thought would, after a few years, offer a sport quite equal to the chase of the red deer. It has been my great good fortune to be allowed to stalk some of the presently existing wild goats, and it may be worth while to record some of my impressions.

On the Atlantic side of one of the largest of the Hebrides great cliffs rear themselves from the sea to a height of nigh nine hundred feet, and at their base are gigantic masses of debris from Nature's workshop, piled in rude confusion. Vegetation is there of the wildest. The iron belt of black reefs, washed by the tide, is rich in groves of seaweed, which float partially submerged. Wind-twisted bushes and patches of dense brake cling to the rocks, and thrust their twining roots into crevice and cleft. On the bare scaurs tufts of heather have settled themselves in purple beauty, emigrants from the uplands far above; and in one or two sheltered spots there are even some small thickets of hardy trees. Seen from a distance seaward, the great expanse of cliffs stretching away for miles appears to present a flat and unbroken face; but when winds and waves permit a landing to be made the whole coast-line shows infinitely varied features—some in sunshine, some in shade—precipice, cavern, gorge, valley, silvery pool,

and roaring torrent. It is on this primeval portion of the island that the goats dwell in the midst of a wilderness where the powers of Nature reign supreme, untrammelled by any of the evidences of man's arts.

The herds are really wild, and come of a wild ancestry. For uncounted generations they have maintained themselves in perfect freedom, and have not sullied their blood by any mixture of a domesticated race. It is possible that, in the distant past, they may have come from a stock which lived among the dwellings of man; but they have now occupied their rocky fastnesses for so long that they may take rank as true *feræ nature*.

If a campaign against these wild goats is to be undertaken, the attack cannot be commenced from the landward side. It would be almost impossible to descend the beetling cliff; and the enterprise, if attempted, would require an undue length of time, besides the assistance of ropes and all the paraphernalia of alpine climbing. So a sea-passage must be made; and it is not on every day of the year that a boat can brave the rollers of the Atlantic or approach the surf-beaten reefs, so that a landing can be effected. I was fortunate, however; and, though the day was cloudy with occasional showers, and light wreaths of mist floated round the lofty crests of the various Bens that look down upon the sea-loch, there was not much sea running, and we pushed off from the primitive little pier with every hope of a not too eventful voyage. Our crew consisted of the stalker, a couple of boatmen, and myself; and, though I knew something of sport in various lands, I was now content to conduct myself as a neophyte, and to obey the orders of the stalker, who was master of the situation. A few strokes with the oars cleared our little craft from the shore, the mast was stepped, and the brown lugsail run up. There was a sudden heave as the boat heeled over and plunged into an advancing wave, covering us with a shower of spray. A careful hand was kept on the

sheet, and a watchful eye looked for the sudden squall which might be expected to whistle down each glen that broke the mass of surrounding mountains. More than once the sheet was perforce let go, and we evaded the power of the keen blast that cut the spindrift from the crested waves. Sea-birds swooped and hovered round us, guillemots dived at our bows, and groups of oyster-catchers rose from the rocky islets that we passed, piping their shrill cry: 'Keep clear! keep clear!'

At last we approached the mouth of the long sea-loch and rounded the black headland. The open Atlantic seas swept down large and threatening; but the breeze was steady, and our little boat rode over them easily. We put our helm up, and pushed on within half a mile of the great cliffs that frowned above the island shore. We had the haunts of the wild goats before us, and in that wide panorama we had to single out our game before we could consider how to attack it. Glasses were uncased, and we carefully scanned the lower cliffs and piles of rock, to detect, if possible, the sought-for herd; and this was no easy matter, for, as is the case with all wild animals, the colour of the goats blends almost indistinguishably with that of their natural surroundings. If they were in the most exposed situation, and remained perfectly steady, it would require a very trained eye and a very powerful stalking-glass to note their presence; but the slightest motion attracts attention and betrays them, so for the moment we confined ourselves to seeking for some moving object. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of some living thing passing from the shelter of one great boulder to that of another. 'What is that, Dougal?' I asked, rather proud in thinking myself the first to see game. But I was promptly snubbed. 'That iss three deer. I haf seen them for some time. They wass lying near that bit wood.' They proved to be a young stag and a couple of hinds that had strayed from the deer-forest, possibly in search of some seaware. As they came more clearly into view, moving towards the airy track that would lead them to the distant pass, very tiny they looked in the midst of their stupendous environment. We stood closer in to the rocks, and peered anxiously into every recess as it opened to our view. At last the stalker said, 'There they are,' and pointed to a mass of gray boulders. At first I could just distinguish a slate-coloured object barely showing itself, which might or might not be an animal's head; but the stalker had made no mistake, for, as the boat slid forward other objects came into sight, and we could identify a small herd—nannies, kids, and one or two long-horned, patriarchally-bearded billies.

How fitly these noble-looking children of the mist took their place in the wild landscape! Picturesque and dignified, they were little like

the poor animals that we associate with the name of goat, living out their peaceful lives in some frowsy farmyard or drawing a toy carriage at a watering-place. In their proud freedom they seemed more akin to the alpine chamois or the ibex of the Neilgherries. We turned our boat's prow away from the shore, and stood out to sea, so that, while we held a council of war upon our future proceedings, we might not alarm the herd and scatter them in flight. It was evident that, if a successful stalk was to be accomplished, we must work from the leeward of the game, and that there was no easy stroll before us if we were to come within rifle-range; so we pushed on far enough to lull suspicion in the watchful vedettes that had marked us sailing by, and then, hidden by a high and rocky point, sought for a convenient landing-place. Well, there are different views of convenience; and if any reader imagines that we found a natural harbour, or even were able to beach our boat on a sloping bed of sand, he or she has never seen the wild Hebrides. After long search, the best that offered was a little cleft in the black reef, and our bows were shoved into it. A tuft of seaweed was grappled with a boat-hook, and those who were for shore had to jump on to a slippery rock while it was for a moment left clear by the heaving waves. The feat was accomplished with a scramble, and the stalker and I found ourselves making our way from crag to crag, while the tide washed and churned beneath us and around.

'We will go up the hill a bit, and get between them and the high pass, in case they are turning that way,' said the stalker. *Hookum hai* ('It is an order'), as we say in India; and the ascent was commenced. I have done some stalking at home and abroad, but never have I met any toil more trying to wind and limb than that climb. First the piles of fallen rocks, reaching high over the shore, had to be surmounted, on which a boot studded with nails took no satisfactory foothold. How I longed for the soles made of woven grass, worn in Indian mountain-climbing, which take a firm grip of any surface, however smooth and treacherous, and defy any chance of slipping. Then we plunged into a thicket and wormed our upward way through intertwined and tough branches, whose sturdy resistance recalled the undergrowth of a tropical forest. Then across an open scaur, dislodging at every footstep stones and masses of earth, which went hurtling away down into depths below, and clinging to every chance tuft of heather or bent-grass that struggled for a bare existence on the bald and wind-swept face. How long our climb lasted cannot be estimated. It seemed as if we had been moving for hours, when, to my profound thankfulness, the stalker thought that we had mounted high enough, and that we had gained such a point of vantage that we might turn downwards towards the herd, sure that, if they were alarmed by anything, or

took it into their heads to move, we should be in the track that they must follow, and would have a chance of intercepting them.

Our movements so far, if toilsome, had at least been conducted on our legs; but now all human dignity was to be abandoned, and we had to grovel forward as best we might on hands and knees, and even occasionally sink upon that vulgar portion of our persons politely called the waist. Before we made our second start a careful survey of our general direction was taken, and the possibilities of eddying gusts coming round corners, which might give our wind to the goats, were discounted by some deviations from a direct advance, and the rifle was carefully loaded. Our course was full of more incident than there is space to describe. I was prepared to bump my shins, to abrade my hands, and to rub the buttons off my garments; and this, of course, I did in full measure; but it was disconcerting indeed when the stalker put up a warning hand and pointed to a venomous viper wriggling to one side of our path. The Hebridean viper's bite is not fatal, but it causes very sufficient and prolonged personal inconvenience, and is by no means to be made light of. I could not help remembering and rather shuddering at the fact that where there is one there are likely to be two or three more, and that it behoved us to 'gang warily' while we were in such dangerous haunts.

Ha! what is that very strong odour that penetrates my nostrils? The wild goat has a very well-defined bouquet of his own, and there is no overlooking the spot where he has been lately grazing. It was evident that we were hard upon our game, and the stalker's advance was made with redoubled caution. For some anxious moments my view of the world was limited to a study of the nails in his brogues, and I grieved that the artistic design which they formed in his soles was generally so completely lost to the world. We crawled round our last boulder. Dougal gave a little motion with his hand, and began to slip the rifle from its case. I saw that the critical moment had arrived, lifted my head, and looked. There was the herd, some feeding, some gambolling and butting each other in a friendly way, all in fancied security.

There is always a deep pleasure to any one who has even a bowing acquaintance with natural history in prying into the family-life of wild animals, and seeing what they do and how they live when their *vie intime* is undisturbed. I sympathise with a well-known and good American sportsman who has performed more exploits with the rifle than most men now living. His greatest joy now is in the stalk itself, and in pitting his intelligence against that of a wild animal, so that he can approach it near enough to study at his leisure all the minutiae of its habits. He carries no more deadly weapon than a camera, and his

trophy of the chase is a photograph of the game. He has all the pleasure that the most exciting sportsman can give, and when it is over he can enjoy a triumph unstained with blood. I have not, however, yet attained to such a philosophical pre-eminence, and I eagerly clutched the rifle that was put into my hands. Did a stalker on such an occasion ever fail to say 'Tak' time'? The idea is firmly impressed on every stalker's mind that the sportsman under his charge is so excited that he will hurry unduly over his shot; and, indeed, it is justified in most cases. After the whispered caution, he indicated a venerable gray billy with magnificent backward-sweeping horns, to whom the rest of the herd seemed to pay unquestioned deference. 'That will be the master-goat. Wait till he turns more this way.' The rifle was laid on a tussock of heather and directed on the bearded patriarch. Slowly he went on nibbling at some tender herbage that he had found, and gradually turned his broadside to me. Crack! The bullet sped, and the poor old billy gave a faint cry as he was mortally stricken. There was a *sauve qui peut* of all his tribe; all betook themselves to panic flight, bounding from rock to rock, and disappearing in the recesses of the wilderness. But their patriarchal ruler's time had come. Feebly he tried to stagger after them, and there was little difficulty in running forward and giving him the *coup de grâce*. Never again would he tread the fastnesses so long his home. Another, taking his place, would become the master-goat, and his harem would pass to another lord.

The obsequies of a goat are best observed from the windward side. Dignified and picturesque as he is in life and at a distance, he is very full-flavoured at close quarters. The head of my billy looks down upon me as I write this; but, though it has gone through many processes at the hands of the taxidermist, it was long before it ceased to shed into the hall where it hangs an odour more noticeable than pleasant. How the stalker was sufficiently callous to perform the *gralloch* was a matter of wonder; still more, that he was able to contemplate with pleasure the eating of certain mysterious parts of the body, which he extracted with care, and laid aside as delicacies for home consumption.

A sandwich, a drink, a smoke. Our boat has followed us round the coast, and is now lying rocking in a little cove hard by the great cavern where the old Jacobite lord lay concealed for months after the '45. Truly the king's officers and soldiers must have had no easy duty in searching for him. The *Sidier Roy* of those days, in their old stiff equipment, were in no case for boat-work in stormy seas and patrolling such a rough coast.

I have told something about stalking wild goats. I can wish for my readers no better fortune than to enjoy such good sport.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER II.

THE mimic war had begun, and for five days the rival fleets had been engaged in active hostilities. A portion of the invading squadron, consisting of two first-class iron-clads, three second-class, a fast cruiser, and three torpedo-boats, had broken out from the port in which they were blockaded and escaped into the mouth of the Channel, where they hoped to be joined by the rest of the fleet. The weather there had been boisterous, and still looked very unsettled; there was a brisk wind blowing, and although the sea was not heavy enough seriously to incommode the large craft, the torpedo-boats were making very bad weather of it. They were, indeed, almost buried in the seas, and were rolling and wallowing so deeply that it was well-nigh impossible to maintain a footing upon their decks.

'Well, I have had enough of torpedo work, Mr Groves,' Lieutenant Winter said to the chief engineer as they stood together on the deck of No. 240, each holding firmly to one of the fittings in order to maintain his footing. 'For smooth water they are fine little craft, but they are no more fit to keep the sea in such weather as this than they are to fly. The motion is awful. I have been ill half-a-dozen times, for the first time since I joined as a midshipman. Two of the men have got badly hurt by being dashed against the bed-places, and the whole crew are completely knocked up with straining and fatigue. As to sleep, it is out of the question, unless you want to get your brains knocked out against the opposite side of the cabin.'

'My hands are dead knocked up,' the engineer said; 'stoking in such weather as this is no joke. Luckily we have not to keep up any great head of steam.'

The lieutenant nodded. 'There is not much sea on, however, for a craft of any size. If a cruiser were to come upon a fleet of torpedo-boats in a rough sea she would be able to capture the lot of them.'

'They are not fit for the sea,' the engineer growled. 'I would as soon be afloat in a bandbox. I would rather take a job for life in a collier than have three months at sea in one of them.'

'The flag-ship is signalling, sir,' the quartermaster, who was at the helm, said.

The lieutenant watched the little black balls going up the mast-head. 'It is our signal,' he said as they broke out into flags; and then ran below.

'Torpedo-boats make for Queenstown,' he said as he returned; 'that is a comfort.'

He took the answering pennant from the sig-

nalling locker and hoisted it himself. 'Lay her head north, quartermaster. I will give you the bearings in a minute;' and he again ran down to consult the chart. 'North-west by north,' he said, when he returned.

'How far do you make it, sir?'

'About sixty-five knots. I wish we had got the order three hours ago; we should have been in by daylight then. You may as well give us a little more steam. We might try twelve knots; if we find that runs her under too much we can slow down a knot or two; but we will hold on if we can at that. I don't like the look of the sky, and I suppose the Admiral doesn't either, or he would not have sent us off; for I know that this was specially intended as a trial whether torpedoes could keep company with the fleet in anything like moderate weather.'

No. 240 was the smallest of the three boats. For a time they kept together, but she made worse weather than the others, and gradually dropped behind. The senior officer hoisted the signal, 'Shall we wait for you?' and Winter replied, 'No, you had better go on; we will steam easily.'

'That is better,' he said to himself as he saw them steadily drawing away. 'It is of no use trying to force her through this; she goes smoothly enough if she is not driven.' He shouted down the tube to the engineer, 'Slow her down a little more; try her at nine knots.'

The change was clearly an advantage. She no longer buried her sharp bows in each wave; and although she quivered and shook as they struck her, her movement was lighter and easier than before. The wind was getting up, and the waves were longer and more regular; but this was an advantage to the boat, as it gave her more time to rise and fall upon them.

'She will do very well if we do not get worse than this before we get in,' the lieutenant said to himself; 'but I shall be very pleased when we see the harbour lights. I wonder what Miss Aspern would say to this; it is rather a contrast to our run three weeks ago.—You had better see to the lights,' he said aloud to the quartermaster, who had now been relieved at the helm. 'We are pretty well in the track of ships coming down the Channel, and the sun must have set now. Another three hours and we shall be in Queenstown.'

'We shan't be sorry for that, sir. This ain't the sort of craft to be knocking about in at night off the Irish coast in nasty weather. There ain't no comfort to be had in them: if you are down below you are pretty nigh smothered; if you are up here you are wet through every

minute with the spray, and think yourself lucky if it ain't green water sweeping along the deck.'

'Tell the cook to send me up a cup of cocoa, quartermaster. The men had better have a cup all round. If the sea gets up any more the cook won't be able to make it, and we shall have a roughish time before we get in.'

'I doubt if he can make it now, sir; she flings herself about so that there is no keeping the kettle upon the stove.'

'Well, if he can't, serve out a tot of grog all round, quartermaster.'

In five minutes the quartermaster returned with a mug of cocoa. 'The cook has made shift to make this, sir,' he said, with a twinkle in his eye; 'but he says as he could only boil a drop in the bottom of the kettle, so I suppose I had better serve out the grog?'

'I thought it would come to that, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said, smiling. 'But the cocoa would have been much better for the men.'

'Well, sir, it would generally; but most of them are so sick that they could not drink cocoa. Why, sir, I was sick myself just now, and I ain't never been sick before since my first voyage.'

'I have been ill myself, quartermaster, so I am not surprised at that. Well, let them have the grog, and tell the lookout to keep his eyes open for lights. It is rather thick, and vessels will be tearing down-Channel before this wind.'

Half-an-hour later there was a sudden crash, followed by two or three short bangs, then dead silence. The engine stopped.

'What is it?' Winter shouted down to the engine-room.

'I don't know yet, sir. I think her propeller has struck floating wood and got knocked off, and the jar has broken something in the engine.'

'Quartermaster, we must get a bit of sail up and keep her before the wind.'

It was not often that a torpedo-boat hoisted sail, which, indeed, was only carried for emergencies like the present.

'Look sharp about it, lads,' Winter said, 'before she has lost her steerage-way. If we get broad-side on there will be no standing on the deck.'

In a short time sail was got on the foremast, and the boat was headed dead before the wind. Then the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Anything serious, Mr Groves?'

'Yes, sir; one of the cylinder covers is split badly, and I fancy the crank is twisted.'

'Is there any repairing it?'

'There is no making a job of it until we get into port. I will try to stop up the crack, but with such a pressure of steam as we work with I doubt whether anything will stand.'

'Well, do the best you can,' the lieutenant said, 'or we shall be blown right into the Atlantic.

I daren't try to make Queenstown, for tide as well as wind would be on her beam; and if we missed the port, as we should be pretty sure to do, nothing could save us.'

As soon as the lieutenant went on deck again he called the quartermaster.

'Get down aft, quartermaster, and see if she is making water.'

The sailor returned almost immediately.

'Yes, sir, she is leaking fast. It is pretty near up to the floor now.'

'Well, man the pumps at once, and then get a tarpaulin, and get it fixed over the stern. I expect when the propeller came off it touched the side, and the skin is no thicker than brown paper. Keep cool and steady, men,' he went on cheerily to them as they rigged the pump; 'we shall soon have the engine at work, and that will help you.'

Leaving the quartermaster to get the sail over the stern, the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Either the propeller or the end of the shaft has made a hole in her skin, Mr Groves. You must disconnect the engine from the shaft, and set it to work the pump. You won't want pressure for that, and would help us if you could manage ever so little.'

'All right, sir; I will do the best I can. I am taking the cylinder cover off, and am going to put canvas underneath it, and then screw it down again with whitelead. It would not stand any pressure; but if we work with ten or twelve pounds of steam, it might do for the pumps.'

'Well, be as quick as you can, Mr Groves, for every minute is of consequence.'

Going on deck again, he went aft and saw to the sail being lashed securely under her bottom.

'Now we will go down aft, quartermaster, with some blankets and canvas, and see if we can get at the place and stop it inside.'

The water was already six inches over the floor-board when they descended. After some work they got to the stern-post, and found the water pouring in through a jagged hole a foot in length. It was close to the stern-post, and was difficult to get at. However, blankets and sails were jammed in, and kept in their place by some pieces of spars, sawn up and wedged against the bulkhead at the end of the compartment. When this was done the lieutenant went again to the engine-room.

'We cannot stop it altogether, Mr Groves, but it is not coming in so fast now.'

'I shall be ready in another few minutes,' the engineer said. 'I think it will work the pumps then if the crank is all right.'

'Have you any water below here?'

'No, sir; I have just taken up a plate to see.'

'That is satisfactory. It shows the bulkhead of the engine-room holds all right;' and the lieutenant again went on deck.

'Get the white light down, quartermaster; we rank as a sailing-ship now.'

The minutes went on, and Winter listened impatiently for the revolving of the engine. In a quarter of an hour the engineer came up.

'I am sorry to say that it won't work, sir. The packing has blown out without her moving. It is that crank that does it.'

'Well, you must try again, Mr Groves,' the lieutenant said quietly. 'You had better see if you can't get the crank right first.—How is the water, quartermaster?' he asked as the engineer went down.

'Gaining, sir; not very fast, but it is two inches deeper than it was when you came up. She is down a lot by the stern.'

'See that the boat is ready for launching, quartermaster. Get a compass, bag of biscuits, and a keg of water on board; and you can put two or three bottles of rum in. I hope it won't come to that, but it is better to be prepared. Let the men put some of their things into their kit-bags; not too much, you know. We don't want more weight on board than we can help; but they may as well take their best things. We can heave them over if the sea gets too heavy. Send Brown to me.'

'Brown,' he went on as the man who worked as his servant came up, 'go below and pack my small portmanteau. Just put in my full-dress uniform and anything else it will hold. Put the signal-books in, and the log-book. Fasten the sextant-case and chronometer outside, so that they can all be carried together.'

Another two hours passed; the utmost efforts of the engineer had been unavailing to start the engine; the stern was below the water, and the bow stood up high in the air. Every wave as it followed ran up the deck.

'Get ready to launch the boat, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said; and calling down the tube, he summoned the engineer and stokers on deck.

'I am going to take to the boat, Mr Groves. With this weight of water in her stern, she may break her back any moment and go down like a stone.'

The boat was swung out, and the men began to take their places in her, when the quartermaster said, 'There is a steamer's light, sir, coming up behind us.'

'Thank God for that!' the lieutenant said earnestly. 'Send up a signal-rocket and burn a blue light. Put two or three blue lights into the boat.'

The rocket soared up, and the blue light burned brightly.

'Now, quartermaster, let two men lower the boat; we will get in when she is in the water. That is right. Now, fend her off carefully. Jump in, lads. There is a blue light on board the steamer, so she sees us.'

Groves and the lieutenant followed, and took their seats in the boat.

'Get out your oars, lads. Now, quartermaster, fire another blue light. That is right. She is not a mile astern; we shall be on board in another ten minutes. Row steadily, men; we have only got to keep her head to the sea, and the steamer will bear down to us and pick us up.'

They had rowed for five minutes when the stroke-oar said, 'She has gone, sir; I think I saw the light of the side-lights a minute ago, and now it has disappeared.'

'Thank God we are out of her!' Winter said reverently. 'I was sure she could not stand that strain long. Another blue light, quartermaster; the steamer is not a quarter of a mile away now.'

The steamer was still burning blue lights, and cheers came up from the sailors and passengers on board as the boat approached her side. A minute later a rope was thrown to her, and a ladder was lowered.

'Now watch your time, lads, and mind how you spring, one at a time—that is the way.'

It needed care, for the steamer was rolling heavily now that she had lost her way. All gained the ladder in safety, Winter being the last to leave the boat, which was then allowed to drop astern, to tow there for the present. The captain was standing at the top of the gangway when the lieutenant came up.

'I congratulate you, sir, on having saved all your hands.'

'I think,' Winter said, smiling, 'that it is to you those words should be addressed. Things were looking very bad when we saw your lights astern. The sea is not heavy yet for an open boat in good trim; but we were closely packed, and the wind is getting up. The lookout would have been a poor one if you had not fortunately come along.'

'One of the torpedo-boats, the men told me?'

'Yes; No. 240. We struck a piece of floating wreckage, which carried away the propeller and knocked a hole through the skin; the shock disabled the engine, so that it could not work the pumps.'

'Well, you will be glad to get into dry clothes. Mr Witherington, our purser, has a cabin ready for you; fortunately the couple for whom it was reserved did not come on board. Your men have taken the portmanteau down there.'

Following the purser, the lieutenant made his way through the passengers, who were clustering round.

'Why, you have brought the large portmanteau, Brown. I told you the small one.'

'Well, sir, I thought it was a pity to leave pretty nigh everything behind; and as I was able to put the sextant and chronometer in here, it did not take up more room, and I got it stowed away in the stern sheets snug enough.'

'Well, now we are here, I am glad you did, Brown, as I expect we shall have to cross the Atlantic and back, and it is certainly a comfort having one's own clothes. Now you had better

hurry off, Brown, and find your own kit. I will come forward as soon as I have got into dry things, and see that the men get everything they want.'

As the lieutenant was dressing, the steward brought him a basin of hot soup, and the sight of this reminded him that he had had nothing since breakfast. As soon as he was dressed he went into the saloon. As he entered, one of the lady passengers rose and came towards him with outstretched hands.

'Miss Aspern!' he exclaimed in surprise.

'That is so, Mr Winter. I thought it was you when the boat came up, and I saw your face by the blue light. You see, they said it was a torpedo-boat when they saw your signal burning on board, and of course that added to my interest in the affair. But here is mamma wanting to speak to you.'

'We are very glad to see you, Mr Winter. Clemence was quite excited when the captain said it was one of the torpedo-boats. She said directly she felt sure that it was yours.'

'I am afraid that that is not a compliment to my seamanship, Miss Aspern.'

'It does not seem like it, certainly,' the girl replied. 'What I thought was, that we seemed fated to run against you. You see, we met at Montreal, and we met again at Cork, and so it seemed likely that we might meet again.'

'In other words, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant

said laughingly, 'it struck you that I was the sort of man that was always turning up like a bad penny; but you must please excuse me now. I must go and look after my men, and see if they are comfortable.'

That duty was speedily performed. The men were all engaged in a hearty supper forward, Groves was established in the engineers' mess, and the lieutenant was not long in finding his way back to the saloon.

'I have not inquired yet as to the name of the ship, Miss Aspern. I need not ask where she is going after seeing you on board.'

'Her name is the *Manitoba*; and if you mean, of course, that she is going to New York, you are wrong; she is bound for Quebec.'

'Quebec?' he repeated in surprise. 'Why are you going round that way, Miss Aspern?'

'Well, the idea struck me that I should like to look in at Lucy Meadows again at Montreal; and as mamma didn't mind which way we went, here we are, you see.'

'Well, I regard it as a wonderful piece of luck, Miss Aspern—on my part, of course. I am very sorry to lose my boat, but fortunately I cannot be blamed for that. Anyhow, if she was to be lost, it could not have happened at a more convenient time and place.'

'Now you must tell us all about it, Mr Winter. I am all anxiety to know how that dear little boat came to be wrecked.'

THE INDUSTRIES OF IRELAND.

BELLEEK.

By MARY GORGES.



THE village of Belleek—the site of Ireland's only china factory—is on the banks of the river Erne, near the borders of Donegal and Fermanagh, and on the skirts of the Donegal highlands. Formerly it was one of the most poverty-stricken places in Ireland; now it is clean, thriving, and has excellent hotel accommodation—a change not owing to the many attractions which draw tourists to its neighbourhood, but to the industry established nearly forty years since—the creation, as it literally is, of the genius and industry of one man, Mr R. W. Armstrong.

Belleek bears witness to the fact that 'the true benefactors of Ireland are the manufacturers,' and that Ireland has no such friend 'as he who stimulates her children to develop at the same time their own great inherent powers and the neglected resources of their country.'

As often happens, the discovery of the riches contained in the soil was made by accident. I take a very clear and full account of this from a

paper contributed to the *Art Journal* about fifteen years after the establishment of the porcelain manufactory, to which it led: 'On the estate of John Caldwell Bloomfield of Castle Caldwell—of which Belleek forms a portion—it was observed that the cabin of a tenant was adorned by an unusually brilliant coat of whitewash. On being questioned, the peasant explained that he had lighted on an old lime-pit, or a supply of "naturally burned lime." This seemed so strange that Mr Bloomfield had the spot examined, and, in consequence of what he found, had borings made in different parts of his estate, which ere long disclosed the existence of a wide stratum of fine white earth. On chemical examination at Dublin this earth proved to be a species of kaolin—a feldspathic clay similar to that which forms the "bones" or interior infusible portion of Chinese porcelain. Other materials were necessary in order to establish a manufacture of pottery from this china-clay, but it proved that the description of feldspathic earth, which is fusible, and which in China, under the name of *pet-un-zz*, forms the

"flesh" or flux of the porcelain, was also to be found on Mr Bloomfield's estate, together with many other valuable minerals.'

These feldspars were submitted to Mr Armstrong, then architect and civil engineer by profession, and residing in London. He repeatedly visited Castle Caldwell, noting with keen eye not only the large quantities of feldspar and other mineral products, but the all but illimitable water-power available, where the Erne concentrates its force and empties itself in tremendous volume over the then picturesque Falls of Belleek. He had a number of trials made from the clay, feldspar, white quartz, &c. at the Royal Porcelain Works, Worcester, where Mr W. H. Kerr, one of the proprietors of these works, and an Irishman, interested himself heartily in having the Irish material tested and tried in every possible way. So satisfactory were the results that, having procured the co-operation of the local landlords, Mr Armstrong formulated a feasible scheme for the establishment of an Irish pottery, and laid it before Mr D. M'Birney, a wealthy Dublin merchant, well known for his energy and enterprise. He took the matter up warmly, ultimately embarking with Mr Armstrong in the practical trial of producing 'first-class ceramic goods in Ireland, made by Irish labour on Irish soil;' an enterprise which at once took root and flourished, and was carried on with singular success, until the death of Mr M'Birney in 1882, followed unfortunately only one year afterwards by that of Mr Armstrong, who was the resident partner and sole director of the works.

It was Mr M'Birney's money that had made the venture possible, while to Mr Armstrong's rare artistic ability and cultivated taste is due the very high standard of excellence which has made Belleek ware famous the wide world over. It may be judged, therefore, how overwhelming was the loss sustained by this still young industry, in which the hearts of its founders were bound up. Great fears, indeed, were entertained as to the possibility of continuing it; but happily, after some fluctuations, it weathered the storm, passing into the hands of its present proprietors, who are carrying it on successfully. The present manager, a native of the locality, is a worthy pupil of the late Mr Armstrong, and his great ability as a designer and modeller guarantees the same purity of taste in form and colour.

But to go back to 'beginnings'—that time of interest, uncertainty, and excitement, whether in the history of an individual or an enterprise. At the outset all the skilled labour was of necessity imported from Staffordshire; but very soon the natives of the district, who began as apprentices, became experts in the various processes of the manufacture, and now for many years the fame of Belleek has been solely made and maintained by native genius and industry.

At the International Exhibition in Dublin in

1865 the sight of this new description of ceramic ware, produced from Irish clays and feldspars by the skill of Irish hands and the exercise of Irish taste, took the general public by surprise—a surprise equalled by the admiration expressed for the porcelain exhibited, the purity and beauty of the material, the ivory tint of its lustrous glaze, and the modelling of its graceful proportions. But nothing excited so much enthusiasm as the groups in porcelain of sporting and other dogs, which delighted equally the keen sportsman and the skilled art judge. I have heard each of these speak of the spirit and beauty, the absolute truth to nature in attitude and expression, the exquisite modelling, of those dogs. The marine shell porcelains came from the same designer, a Mr Dunbar, who, though an amateur, worked with his own hands in the pottery, and to him in those early years it owed much.

A writer in the *Art Journal* says: 'The chief peculiarities of Belleek ornamental ware are its lightness of body, its rich, delicate, cream-like or ivory tint, and the glittering iridescence of its glaze. Although the principal productions hitherto have been formed of this white ware, local clays have been found which yield jet, red, and cane-coloured wares, and fac-similes of sea-shells and of branches of coral are shown by some of the agents which might well be supposed to be natural. The iridescent effect produced is somewhat similar to the ruby lustre of Gubbio majolica, that famous Italian enamelled ware of which an unrivalled collection is to be seen at the South Kensington Museum.'

Some of the illustrations which are given in the *Art Journal* convey a very clear idea of the great beauty of form and originality of design which was attained. Four of these illustrations are of pieces from a tea and dessert service ordered respectively by the Queen and the Prince of Wales, and mention is also made of a breakfast and dessert service as being then in progress for Her Majesty. To this I may add that quite recently the Queen was supplied with a breakfast-set costing fifty pounds.

The sea has suggested many of the designs for Belleek ware, as was natural from the proximity of the wild coast of Donegal. But the designer has the merit of being the first artist to use the sub-kingdom of the Radiata for his types. The animals of this great natural group are for the most part characterised 'by a star-shaped or wheel-shaped symmetry. From the globular shape of the commonest sea-urchin, through the flattened and depressed form of others of the family, the transition is regular and gradual to the well-known five-fingered star-fish, and to those wonderfully branched and foliated forms which shatter themselves into a thousand fragments when they are brought up by the dredge from deep water and exposed for a moment to the air. Under the name of *frutti di*

mare these sea-eggs, covered as they are by innumerable pink and white spines, form a favourite portion of the diet of the southern Italians. When the spines by which the creature moves are stripped off, the projections and depressions of the testa, or shell, are often marked by great beauty of pattern; and it would hardly have been possible to bring into the service of plastic art a more appropriate group of natural models.' In more conventional designs, such as the mermaid, the nereid, the dolphin, and the sea-horse, a great excellence has been attained, and the happiest effect is produced by the contrast between the dead, Parian-like surface of the unglazed china and the sparkling iridescence of the ivory-glazed ground. This effect was very striking in the dessert-service made for the Prince of Wales. Three mermaids in Parian ware support the shell-formed base of the ice-pail, around which a group of Tritons and dolphins are sporting in the water. A wreath of coral surrounds the rim of the vase. The cover is, as it were, the boiling, surging sea, from which three sea-horses have partially risen, while in the centre a Triton riding on a dolphin forms the handle. Another piece of this service is a tazza-vase, considered 'one of the most faultless specimens that Irish taste has produced.' It stands on a pedestal, round which hangs a wreath of flowers dependent from rams' heads. 'The form is purely classic, the design as delicate as it is possible to wish anything to be, and the soft, creamy, unglazed white of the Parian ware—as this kind of biscuit is called—is equal, if not superior, to the finest specimens of any similar porcelain.'

The Belleek wares have found their way into the United States, Canada, India, and Australia. But any one wishing to judge at home of the present-day products can satisfy themselves, as I did, by a visit to the establishment of Mr Perceval Jones, Westmoreland Street, Dublin, that the former high standard of art is maintained, and that skill and taste continue to reign supreme in the manufacture of our one Irish porcelain. The new 'Neptune ware' is beautiful. I saw exhibited here the daintiest little afternoon tea-service in this—the tray shaped like a shell, with a rough surface to represent coral; the cups, cream-jug, and tea-pot formed likewise of glistening shells, the lid of the latter one shell; while the most delicate yet vivid green, the green of the budding grass, or rather of a certain filmy seaweed when, as it lies just under the water, it catches the glittering sunbeams, is wreathed like coral stems, so as to form both a rim and handles. The lovely contrast with pure and lustrous white may be imagined. The price of this tea-service was two pounds seven shillings and sixpence, which seemed to me moderate, remembering sums paid in former years for afternoon tea-services not to be compared to this in beauty of design or workmanship. There were many other specimens of Belleek china on view at this establishment:

baskets in open or trellis work, vases, flower-stands, jugs, little buckets and pails, some in marine design, some with shamrock-wreaths, and handles deftly moulded as coral or shamrock stems, to carry out the idea in each. The 'Irish pot' was very much in evidence, and exceedingly quaint and 'fetching' it looked in Parian. I saw pots and jugs which presented no appearance of cheapness, yet marked as low as one shilling.

My experience of Belleek ware on that day was not to end here. I was spending the afternoon with a friend, and noticed on the mantelpiece two most beautiful models of sporting dogs in this very Parian. It seems they had been bequeathed to the husband of my hostess, and were of great value. She had not heard their previous history, but it was easy to recognise them as some of the famous work designed and modelled by Mr Dunbar, and so admired at the Dublin Exhibition of 1865.

The glory of Belleek, and its speciality, is this exquisite Parian or ivory china, on which the stamp of approval has been set by many nations. It is to be found in all the cities and large towns in England, Ireland, and Scotland; also in Paris, and in the chief cities of America. Indeed, the trade with America is large and constantly increasing. Besides this fancy china, which includes dinner, breakfast, and tea services, and toilet sets, commoner wares are produced for household and for sanitary purposes. All requisites for kitchen, pantry, and dairy use are included in this household ware, while the sanitary is well known and recommended by the most eminent sanitary engineers in the United Kingdom. Many tons of this ware go to Paris annually.

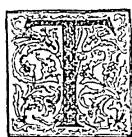
The works, which are both substantial and extensive, present a fine architectural appearance, and are fitted up with all modern machinery and requisites for a first-class pottery. The decorative department is one of the most important and interesting, and so comprehensive as to include every known and approved means for the embellishment of ceramics. In the airy, well-lighted rooms the workmen may be seen busily engaged at the various branches, gilding, ground-laying, tinting, lustring, painting, &c. Over two hundred hands are employed at these works. Dinner-sets range in price from two pounds five shillings to sixteen pounds; breakfast-sets from two pounds ten shillings to fifteen guineas; toilet-sets from five shillings to two pounds ten shillings; and, as all are highly decorated, the prices seem only in fair and moderate proportion to the time and labour bestowed upon them. In illustration of this, take an ordinary Belleek dinner-plate, having a pretty floral pattern printed under glaze and finished in gold and colours. First of all the pattern must be carefully thought out in every detail and drawn on the plate, the better to judge of its effect. To be good it must be quite original and in strict

accordance with well-defined principles of design. When approved of it is handed over to the engraver, who engraves it on a sheet of copper, from which can be produced a countless number of fac-simile copies of the original design. When finished the copperplate passes on to the printer, who spreads a thin layer of soft colour, mixed with a peculiar kind of oil, all over its surface. Then, taking a large palette-knife, he cleans the colours off, save what is caught in the indentations made by the engraver's tool, and, laying a sheet of thin porous printing-paper over it, he passes it through a heavy press. This causes the colour that lay in the engraving to adhere to the paper, which is now removed and handed to the 'transferer,' who places it carefully, colour side downward, on the biscuit dinner-plate, and rubs it lightly with a flannel pad, after which it is immersed in water, when the paper is easily withdrawn, leaving the colours behind to form the pattern. The next stage is to the enamellers, where a portion of the design is filled with red, blue, yellow, and

other rich colours. The plate has yet to be glazed. As the colour is mixed with oil and the glaze is prepared with water, the necessity arises of firing the piece in the 'hardening-on' kiln, which has the effect of burning out the oil without detaching the colour. From the 'hardening-on' kiln it passes to the dipping-house, where it is dipped in the liquid which forms the glaze, and thence through the 'glost' oven. When the plate is enhanced by gilding, it requires an additional firing in the enamel-kiln, as gold will not stand the extreme heat of the 'glost' oven. After firing, it requires burnishing to make it shine in full brilliancy. Belleek turns out very high-class decoration in lovely shades of pink, mauve, blue, green, &c. To attain a still greater degree of perfection hand-painting is resorted to, and pretty designs are produced of birds, flowers, &c., and of local scenery, which is most admired. Recently one of the leading Indian Rajahs ordered a dinner-set decorated with local scenery and hand-painted, which cost fifty pounds.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

PART II.



HE honey really is beautiful this year, sir,' remarked Mrs Peggy, some weeks after the foregoing events, as she was putting a dish of it on the table for her master's simple tea; for Edward Martyn was old-fashioned in his habits, and stuck to the old-fashioned five o'clock tea, with the white cloth on the table, on which home-made tea-cakes, and home-made jams, and honey were set, but nothing of a more satisfying nature.

'Yes, I think it is the nicest we have had, Peggy. We could get a prize if we cared to exhibit.'

'The combs really is lovely, sir. I must show you a splendid piece I've got, and the honey draining from it grand.'

Suiting the action to the word, she fetched from her pantry stores a huge block of pure-white comb on one of those large, deep china dishes so much in vogue in our grandmothers' day.

'There!' she exclaimed triumphantly, setting it on the table; 'if that ain't a piece as any bee-fancier might be proud on, my name ain't Peggy Partington.'

'It's a pleasure to look at, and I really do feel proud of it, Peggy; and you may be equally so, for it is owing to your care and attention that the bees have flourished so well,' he replied, smiling.

Now, as he sat enjoying his honey, the thought came into his mind how much he would like Miss Adlington to taste it; and there and then

he determined to take her a jar and ask her acceptance of it. But the crucial point was how to get it conveyed to its destination without Peggy knowing. Somehow—he could hardly have said why—he did not care for her sharp eyes to see him carrying honey to Sycamore Cottage.

Late that night, when his housekeeper was sound asleep, the master crept stealthily, like a guilty schoolboy, into the pantry and counted the honey-jars.

'Nine!' he exclaimed. 'Ah! that's better than an even number. I can take one and rearrange them, I fancy, so that Peggy won't discover the theft.' And he did.

The next evening found him wending his way to Chestnut Lane, with a jar of honey securely tied up in two thicknesses of brown paper in the pocket of his tail-coat.

He felt more than usually awkward when he entered the pretty sitting-room in which Dorothy was seated by the open window at some fancy-work; but his nervousness increased tenfold after he sat down, for, on putting his hand behind him, to his horror he felt the honey trickling out of his pocket on to the chair. The perspiration stood in large drops upon his forehead, and he made several ineffectual attempts to rise, but felt as though he were glued to the chair. At length, making a desperate effort, he said hesitantly:

'I've b-brought you some honey from my bees, and'—

'How kind of you!' interrupted Dorothy, anxious to put him at ease. 'I have often thought about

your naughty bees that gave you so much trouble, and wondered how they have behaved since. It was so tiresome for you.'

'I am very g-glad they swarmed here, or I should not have known you.'

'Then I am grateful to the bees too,' she replied, smiling; 'for I am glad to know you. But where is my honey? On the hall-table?'

'N-no; it's in my pocket, and I'm afraid'—

'Oh!' she exclaimed in a dismayed tone, 'it will be running away, and spoiling your pocket and coat. Oh, dear! dear!' This as she saw the honey like a snail-trail on the chair, from which he had risen in much trepidation.

'I really am so sorry,' he said, taking the sticky jar from his pocket.

'Oh, never mind,' she replied cheerfully. 'There are worse things at sea. A damp cloth will soon put the chair right. But I am afraid your coat is in a bit of a mess;' and, despite her efforts to keep grave, she could not help laughing when she saw how woe-begone he looked.

He smiled too, but somewhat ruefully.

'I'm an awkward, blundering fellow. You'll wish me and the honey far enough, making such a mess.'

'Now, please, don't mind, Mr Martyn; there is no harm done. Here, Lizzie'—this to the neat, trim maid who had entered in obedience to her summons—'will you take this jar of honey Mr Martyn has kindly brought us, and bring a damp cloth to wipe off the stickiness? We have managed to spill a little somehow.'

After the coat-pocket had been well rubbed by Lizzie, and the wet towel applied here and there to the coat, Dorothy suggested that they should go into the garden to look at a rose-bush which was one mass of bloom, and one of her father's special favourites.

Here they found Mr Adlington engaged watering, picking off dead leaves, and tidying up generally.

Long after dusk they lingered in the still evening air, as though loath to break the spell that the golden red sunset had left upon them.

As before, Mr Martyn stayed to the dainty little supper; and when his eyes descried the ill-fated honey-jar he exchanged amused glances with Dorothy.

As he walked home that night through the silent streets of the little town, Edward Martyn knew that he loved Dorothy Adlington—loved her with the strong first love of a man who has all his life gone hungry and hardly realised it until the Land of Goshen was in sight. And now the silent stars told her name, the rustling leaves whispered 'Dorothy,' and the birds when they sang warbled 'Dor-r-r-r-o-o-th-y,' 'Dor-r-r-r-o-o-o-th-y,' over and over again, and his own heart trembled with a secret interwoven with joy and fear.

In those days a change came over the master.

The boys felt it, but could not have defined it; but somehow, when Jackson felt 'awfully down about his exam.,' he found himself telling the master how disappointed his people would be if he did not pass, and sympathy and help being tendered him from 'Carrots;' and when Jimmy Beans lost his chance of the second-form prize, it was the master who, finding him weeping in a corner, comforted and cheered him by kindly words of encouragement; and Robinson said 'Carrots was a brick, as he took no end of trouble with that cad Evans, to show him how wrongly he had acted.'

Yes. Love—the glorifier, the beautifier, the transformer—had come into his life; and because of this he wanted to make every one around him brighter and happier. Even though he should never enter the gates of Eden, he knew that he was a better and truer man for knowing and loving Dorothy Adlington.

During that spring and following summer he found many excuses for coming to Sycamore Cottage; plants, roots, flowers, even bees and honey, were pressed into the service; and Mr Adlington, fond as he was of his garden, had never had it so gay.

One day, the talk turning on the varied colouring of butterflies, he ventured to ask father and daughter if they would spend an evening with him, and then he would show them his collection.

'I know it is worth looking at, for the curator at the museum in B—— said it was the finest private collection he'd seen,' he added, with pardonable pride.

They thanked him, and said how pleased they would be to come; so one evening Dorothy, in her blue-and-white gown, which her father said 'matched her eyes,' set out with him to the schoolhouse.

She was delighted at the thought of seeing its oak doors and carved oak mantelpieces, as she had often heard them spoken of with veneration by lovers of the antique.

Mrs Peggy had put on the best damask tablecloth and brought out the blue-and-white china, which had belonged to the master's grandmother, and placed in the centre the deep dish with a beautiful piece of honey in the comb; but it was his hand that gave the finishing touches to the table by placing here and there old-fashioned vases filled with blue-and-white flowers.

When Dorothy entered the oak-panelled room she thought she had never seen anything so quaint and old, and yet so pretty and dainty, in her life.

Of course she presided, and looked charming. He wondered if she remembered that it was in that 'frock' he had first seen her; he hoped she did.

The evening passed all too quickly; and the master, having interested, intelligent listeners, showed himself to the best advantage.

Mr Adlington was amazed at the splendid collection, not only of butterflies, but of all sorts of insects, that he had to exhibit to them, and expressed the hope that he might often come and explore the wealth the cases contained at his leisure.

In the dusk they walked down to the beehives; and, whilst Mr Adlington was busy contemplating something at the other end of the garden, Edward Martyn said:

'I take off my hat to my bees every day and whisper to them.'

'Do you?' replied Dorothy, laughing. 'What do you say?'

'I say, "Thank you, O Bees! Bees! for swarming at Sycamore Cottage."'

Dorothy coloured slightly, but replied laughingly:

'How pretty and poetical of you!'

He looked at her, and what he would have said remained unspoken, for at that moment Mr Adlington's voice called out:

'Dorothy! Dorothy! come and look at this beautiful variegated leaf. I never saw one so delicately veined.'

As Edward Martyn helped the girl on with her pretty light wrap at the close of the evening, he wondered if he would ever have the exquisite bliss of folding her in his arms and saying, 'My wife.' He prayed God that he might.

And Dorothy? After kissing her father good-night, instead of getting into bed she sat, with her lovely hair falling about her shoulders, thinking, and Edward Martyn occupied by far the larger portion of her thoughts.

Did Mr Adlington suspect that his 'little girl's' heart had been stolen by the grave, shy scholar? If he did he never said so; but he smiled to himself when he found flowers and honey so plentiful that year.

The autumn following that summer lingered long; and in October, with its red, russet, and yellow leaves and changing tints, came the crowning glory of an Indian summer.

It was on one of those days redolent with the scents of autumn that the master went to London, none knew why or where; but the stroke of two found him in Wimpole Street, inside the consulting-room of one of the leading physicians of the day.

He was a brave man where physical pain was concerned; still, he dreaded the verdict that the great doctor would pronounce, not because of what he might have to suffer, but—*because he loved.*

'As you ask me to tell you the exact truth,' the physician said, not unkindly, 'I must say that your symptoms are very grave. The heart is considerably dilated; still, with care—great care, you know—you may live many years.'

Edward Martyn listened as one in a dream.

'What is your profession or business?'

'I am a schoolmaster.'

'Ah! Ahem! Well, as long as you can teach without exciting yourself you are all right.'

'Thank you,' he said as he rose to go. 'I suppose the pain will always be present?'

'Not necessarily; this prescription may do much for you. Still, I repeat, you must be very careful.'

Out again in the brilliant autumn sunshine, amidst the happy chattering groups of men and maidens, boys and girls, he wondered what burden each one carried under a careless exterior, for it seemed to him then as though every one must lie in the shadow.

On he walked, heedless of time, till he found himself crushing beneath his feet the yellow, golden leaves fallen from the trees in Hyde Park; then he realised how far he had come and how late the hour. He retraced his steps quickly, then stopped suddenly in his hurried walk, saying, 'I forgot; I must not hurry,' and called a hansom.

He reached home at the time he had stated, and Peggy had supper awaiting him; but she ventured to remonstrate when she came to take away the things and noticed that he had scarcely touched the food that she had prepared with so much care.

'Really, sir, I do think as you did ought to see a doctor. You've been quite off your food lately.'

He smiled faintly. 'How little she knew! And how her warm, honest heart would grieve when she did know!' he thought.

'It is a shame, Peggy, that such good cooking should be unappreciated; but I am not just up to the mark. When the holidays come, and I get a good rest, I shall feel better. It only wants a few weeks.'

'A few weeks!' snapped Peggy. 'What you want, sir, if I may make so bold, is rest now, not to wait for the holidays. Them boys 'ud wear out an archangel, let alone a human.'

At this the master laughed heartily in spite of himself, telling Peggy he was sorry that she entertained so poor an opinion of his promising pupils.

Three or four weeks passed—weeks of conflict and indecision, and weeks in which he purposely avoided Dorothy. Day after day and hour after hour he asked himself the question, Would it be right to ask her to become his wife under the circumstances of his delicate health? And at length he decided it would not; but only God and himself knew what that decision cost him.

'I will tell her I love her, and why I cannot ask her to be my wife; for I should like the little girl to know, though she can never be mine, that she has won all I ever had and ever shall have to give: the love of a poky—yes, that was what they called me—old bookworm. Oh! but it's hard, my-God! What awful limitations this life has!' Thus he thought.

Again he stood by the bee-hives, decaying leaves and signs of approaching winter around ; and yet over all there lingered the last faint touches of the dying autumn.

The town was keeping holiday in honour of some local event, and Mrs Peggy had gone to see the display of bunting, &c., leaving tea ready in the oak-panelled room ; but the master did not feel like holidaying. As he paced the gravel path backwards and forwards his thoughts went back to that day in spring when he heard the girlish voice saying, 'He's far cleverer than any one in the town. It's better to be clever and shy than'— And he knew now that his then unknown champion was Dorothy Adlington. Had he not learnt by heart every tone of her voice and— Why, there it was sounding in his ears this very moment, as, the garden-door being gently opened, he heard :

'Mr Martyn ! Mr Martyn ! are you there ?' and a laughing face appeared round the corner.

He came forward ; and, in her sweet, unconventional way, Dorothy extended her hand, saying :

'I rapped several times ; then I rang ; and, getting no answer, I thought I'd try the garden as a last resource. So I came into the lane, and peeped in, and saw you. Father has sent you a message. He has not been out for several days ; he has had a nasty cold, and I have been doctoring him, and he is a little tired of poultices and gruel, and wonders if you will take pity on him and have a game at chess—will you ?'

He looked at her with a sort of pained look in his eyes, and she knew in an instant that he was not well, not himself. Her face changed, and she said gently :

'Aren't you well, Mr Martyn ? I am so sorry.'

He moved a step nearer and answered :

'I am not very well ; but, Dor—Miss Adlington, will you listen to me for a few minutes—let us stand by the bee-hives—while I tell you what perhaps you may care little to hear ?'

The hot blood suffused her cheeks, and as she looked at him something in her shy eyes told him that there might have been hope for him ; but she answered not a word. For a moment there was absolute silence, unless for the floating of a leaf here and there, which the soft south wind carried away from the trees.

'I went to London a few weeks ago,' he continued, 'to consult one of the first physicians about myself ; and—the verdict is bad. My heart is seriously affected, and—I can never hope to marry ; but, oh, Dorothy !—here he touched her hand—'had I been strong and well I had hoped one day to gain your love ; but my dream is over. Only, my darling ! my darling !—here he took her unresisting hands, and looked into her face with a great, tender love—'I wanted you to know that I loved you from the first night I saw you—nay, even before ; and here by the bees, which have shared my joy, I tell you, my little girl,

that you are my first and only love. Even though it is nothing to you, I felt it was right that you should know it.'

'But it is something to me,' she answered in a low, tremulous voice.

'Dorothy !' he exclaimed, 'is it possible that you care for me ?' and, throwing aside all the restraint he had imposed upon himself, he clasped her in his arms.

'Only for once, just once, my little girl. Never again ; only this once.'

For a moment or two neither spoke, and then Dorothy said softly :

'Tell me all the doctor said.'

So, pacing slowly up and down in front of the hives, out of which a stray bee crept now and again, he told her all : how he had loved her ; how he had longed to tell her so, and dared not, thinking she would never care for an old 'poky' (he smiled grimly as he uttered the word) fellow like him ; and yet he had hoped. Then came the crushing blow—the doctor's verdict.

'I had not felt well for some time,' he said, 'but put it down to ordinary causes—overwork, &c. But latterly the pain at my heart had become so severe at times that I knew there must be something wrong ; but I never dreamt I was suffering from anything serious. So, now, darling, if I have done wrong in speaking to you of my love, forgive me ; but I could not bear the thought that you should think I had paid you attention and meant nothing by it. Again I say, forgive me.'

'There is nothing to forgive,' replied Dorothy sadly. 'I would far rather know that you loved me. I think it an honour to be loved by you.'

'Oh Dorothy !'

Again there was silence, in which the busy hum of the little town came floating towards them, accompanied by the discordant sounds of various sorts of music. Edward Martyn thought that he should ever retain those sounds in his brain, and a similar thought was in Dorothy's mind. At length he said wistfully :

'The doctor said the medicine might do much for me ; perhaps'—

'Oh ! you will get strong and well if you take great care and do as he told you. People often live the longest who have to be careful,' she said, smiling at him.

'And then, would you be my wife, Dorothy ?'

He read the answer in her face, though she did not reply in words.

'But, my darling, it does not seem fair to ask you to wait. You must be perfectly free, so that if'—

'If any one else asks me I can say yes,' she interrupted, laughingly. 'Then you don't really mind very much.'

The laugh was infectious, and a great hope sprang up in him at that moment that he would get better.

They talked on oblivious of time, until Dorothy, hearing the church clock strike, exclaimed :

'Father will think I am lost.'

'May I come in this evening, then?'

'Father asked you,' she replied demurely.

He took her hand and drew her towards him, and saying, 'May I?' kissed her reverently.

'I am glad it was by the bees that I told you of my love. I wonder if they know all they have done for me. I owe them much.'

'I, too, am in their debt,' she said, smilingly, as she closed the garden-door behind her.

It was thus the master told his love.

In a sunny garden, facing the south, a man and woman stood gazing at the fair scene that stretched out before them. They had been silent for some minutes, lost in happy memories ; then he turned towards her, and taking her hand, said :

'Dorothy, you've never regretted it?'

The look she gave him satisfied him, though she spoke no word ; and again there was the silence born of perfect understanding.

Suddenly a dark speck loomed on the horizon, and she exclaimed :

'There they are, Edward !'

'What? Where? The bees?' he answered excitedly. 'So they are. Now we must manage to take them somehow.'

'Oh, we shall manage them all right. They are coming in our direction. I have become an adept at swarm-taking since the days at Bury-cum-Thorpe.'

The master took off his hat as the dark mass came nearer, and made obeisance to them, saying as he did so :

'Every day I thank you, O Bees ! Bees ! and to-night I thank you again.'

ANTIQUE GOBLETS AND DRINKING-VESSELS.



MUCH of the best work of the craftsmen of former times was expended on the ornamentation of the gold and silver goblets and drinking-vessels of various kinds, regarded by our ancestors as among their most precious possessions. These old 'mazers' and tankards, moreover, with their humbler relatives in brown stoneware, have many an association with various phases of social life which have passed away ; and the sense of an allusion in literature may often be missed without some knowledge of the curious names and shapes with which they have been endowed.

In Anglo-Saxon days, when long and deep potations were frequent, the drinking cup or horn was held in high estimation, and the old poem in *Beowulf* tells us that among the treasures of the ancient barrow guarded over by the monster Grendel is 'the solid cup, the costly drinking-vessel.' The skull of a fallen foe was not infrequently employed for this purpose. Drinking-cups are often found in Anglo-Saxon tombs, some discovered in the barrows of Kent being of glass, and made on the 'tumbler' principle, so that their contents should be emptied at one draught.

One of the earliest vessels which have come down to us is the celebrated Horn of Ulphus, made of an elephant's tusk, and dating from a period shortly before the Conquest. This horn—now in York Cathedral—is supposed to have been placed on the altar by Ulph, the son of Thorald, the lord of much land in East Yorkshire, in token that he bestowed certain lands on the church of St Peter. Another version of the story is, that this worthy Dane, when his sons were disputing as to the succession to his estate, cut short the dispute by repairing to York Minster, and there

draining the horn before the high-altar as a pledge and evidence of the gift of all his lands and revenues to the Church.

Among curious examples of drinking-vessels are the Peg Tankards, one of which, made of oak, with the figures of the twelve apostles round the sides, was found in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. King Edgar, it is said at the instigation of Dunstan, put down many ale-houses, and ordained that pegs should be fastened in the drinking-horns at intervals, in order that whosoever drank beyond certain of these marks at a single draught should be liable to punishment. These peg tankards were divided into eight draughts by means of the pegs, and usually contained two quarts. The edict, however, does not appear to have had the intended effect, for in 1102 we find Anselm decreeing that no priest should 'go to drinking-bouts nor drink to pegs.'

One of the earliest examples of the Mazer (called after a Norse name of the 'maple') is that preserved at Herboldown Hospital, near Canterbury, which dates from the reign of Edward I. This maple-wood bowl stands on a low foot, and measures about eight inches in diameter at the upper edge. It is mounted in silver-gilt, and at the bottom contains a silver-gilt medallion representing Guy of Warwick transfixing a dragon with his lance, while a lion seems about to attack. This cup, which holds six pints of wine, was used at the yearly feast in memory of St Nicholas. Another mazer of the time of Richard II. is of highly polished wood, and has on its silver-gilt rim the following engraved exhortation :

In the name of the Trinitie,
Fille the kup, and drink to me.

Mazers were sometimes lined with silver and

adorned with carving, after the fashion of the one alluded to by the poet Spenser in the lines :

Then lo, Perigot ! the pledge which I plight,
A mazer ywrought of the maple ware,
Wherein is enchased many a fair sight
Of bears and tigers that maken fierce war.

Frequently the mazer was without feet, and can hardly be distinguished from an alms-dish.

Passing from these ancient vessels—mostly the property of some ecclesiastical foundation—to the more secular Goblet, we find many examples of the high importance which was attached to it in the wills and bequests of early times. The standing cup in which it was customary to receive the wine from the butler's hand, after it had been duly tested or 'assayed,' was at times termed a 'Hanap,' from which the word 'hamper' is supposed to be derived. Various materials were employed in the construction of the more costly vessels, such as gold, silver, the egg of the ostrich, the shell of the coco-nut, and curiously mottled woods.

Cups had frequently distinguishing names and titles; thus, Richard, Earl of Arundel, in 1392 bequeaths to his wife Philippa her own cup, called 'Bealehier;' while another nobleman of a rather earlier date has a cup of gold with an acorn, called 'Benesoune,' and another which went by the name of 'Wassail.'

In the middle of the fifteenth century we find the Prior of Durham mentioning one of his drinking-vessels as 'Beda,' and another as 'Abell.' The standing cup and cover which was sometimes placed on the table, and at others was handed to the lord when he chose to drink, is called a hanaper in Lord Latimer's will in the year 1381—'le grant hanaper d'argent endoeré appellé Seint George.'

The constant fear of poison in which the richer classes stood in former times is often illustrated in the manufacture of drinking-vessels. It was believed that cups made of the horn of the narwhal had the power of detecting poison. Frequent use was made of turquoises, amethysts, crystals, and other precious stones in ornamenting goblets, with some such idea beyond the ostensible purpose of decoration. Queen Elizabeth's silver-gilt cup, standing on three knobs, has its cover, sides, and knobs covered with amethysts of various tints, the interstices being filled with small turquoises.

Precious stones were believed to be endued with many mystical qualities. The turquoise was supposed to have the power of strengthening the eyes, and was also of use in detecting the presence of poison, by becoming of a paler hue. The opal, however, in the goblet of Pope Alexander VI. did not avail him in escaping the fate traditionally assigned to him. In a similar fashion, crystals of various kinds were believed to become clouded. Thus the so-called Poison Cup belonging to Clare College, Cambridge, has a crystal mounted in the centre of the lid. In a translation of Petrarch's *Phisicke against Fortune* (published about 1579) we have a dialogue of 'cuppes made of precious

stones,' in which one of the characters—'Joy' by name—is made to say, 'I am desyrous to drynke in cups of precious stones;' to which 'Reason' replies, 'Perhaps there is some other cause of so fervent desire: for it is not the glistening only that allureth thee, but some hydden virtue, for who is able to declare all the operations and virtues of precious stones?' And he adds, 'There have been some that have beleevd that by virtue of this stone [the amethyst] promysing them sobrietie they might boldly quaffe without fear of drunkennesse.'

The Duke of Anjou possessed thirty-nine gold and silver goblets in the fourteenth century; and Charles V. of France had fully as many, and among them one of jasper. Crystal ones were in use, and a sapphire surmounted the cover of a goblet belonging to the queen of Philippe le Bel. While the French King John was a captive in England, we find him paying to a certain John Corbière, a goldsmith of London, three hundred and nine moutons d'or for a goblet weighing nearly six marks, from which he drank until the English kings graciously sent him his own as a present. The memento given by Pope Clement to the unfortunate Charles VI. took the form of a goblet of rock-crystal mounted in gold.

A gilt cup in the shape of a lamp figured in the trousseau of Mary of Burgundy, Countess of Cleves, at the commencement of the fifteenth century; and we have notice of another made like a candlestick. Cups of the Elizabethan age were occasionally fashioned as gourds or melons, with feet formed as their twisted stems and tendrils. At times they were made to represent birds, as the 'Cockayne' Cup belonging to the Skinners' Company, presented by the widow of a gentleman named Peacock.

One of the finest examples of the goldsmith's art in Stuart times is the Royal Oak Grace Cup, presented to the Barber Surgeons' Company by Charles II. It is over sixteen inches high, and formed as an oak-tree, the trunk and branches supporting the bowl, while the royal crown serves as a cover.

During the sixteenth and following century the quaint Wager or Surprise Cups were in fashion. A familiar example of these takes the form of a woman holding a smaller cup over her head, with arms upstretched, the object of the drinker being to drain the contents of the larger cup without spilling the liquid in the smaller one. Another vessel used for betting purposes was the *Gobelet-à-moulin*, or windmill goblet, provided with a small whistle, which, on being blown, set in motion the sails of the mill; and before they had stopped working, the cup was to be drained.

Grotesque forms were often given to drinking-vessels. Such are the graybeards or Bellarmines, with their rotund bodies, narrow necks, and Silenus-like masks in front, made of a grayish-coloured stoneware, covered by a mottled brown glaze. Cardinal Bellarmine's countenance would appear to have been quite unlike these effigies; they seem to have been made in Holland when

religious disputes were fierce, and may have been intended by one party to bring ridicule on the other. Another explanation is provided in the story of an Oxford student who, one day returning with a jug of ale under his cloak, on being questioned by a university official, replied that he had merely been to borrow the works of Bellarmine! These grotesque vessels are frequently referred to by writers of the time of Elizabeth and the earlier Stuarts.

Representations of misshapen human beings are to be found among the drinking-vessels of antiquity; and of a similar character is the Toby Pitcher, or image mug, produced in the Staffordshire and other potteries. Another curious bowl, of large dimensions, was styled a 'Jeroboam,' and was generally wrought of metal. The high-stemmed wine-glass of the seventeenth century was sometimes called a 'Tall-boy.'

Of leathern vessels, the most famous was the 'Black Jack,' so called because it resembled a jack or coat of mail or leather. Akin to this, though more capacious, was the 'Bombard,' deriving its name from the huge piece of ordnance so called. References to both of these are frequently to be met with in the literature of the seventeenth century. Thus Grumio, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, says to Curtis, 'Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without.' And again, in the first part of *Henry IV.*, Prince Hal describes Falstaff as that 'swoln parcel of dropsies, that hugh bombard of sack;' and in the *Tempest* a black cloud is likened to a 'foul bombard that would shed his liquor.' In the *Philocthonista* of Heywood the dramatist we read that 'small jacks wee have in many ale-houses of the citie and suburbs tipt with silver, besides the great black jacks and bombards at the court, which, when the Frenchmen first saw, they reported at their returne into their country that the Englishmen used to drink out of their bootes.' Bishop Hall in his *Satires* speaks of 'charging whole boots full to their friends' welfare;' and, indeed, it is on record that actual boots have been employed as drinking-vessels. Marshal Bassompierre, who was sent on an embassy to Switzerland in 1625, drank his friend's health in one of his military boots before returning, ordinary cups being too small for the occasion. Once, too, it was considered a mark of gallantry to toast a fair lady from her shoe. In the song of 'Sir John Barleycorn'—an allegory of the grain of barley, which the farmer, the maltster, the miller, and the brewer are bent on destroying—we read that

Some of them fought in a black-jack,
Some of them in a can;
But the chiefest in a black-pot,
Like a worthy alderman.

The rim of the black-jack was often of silver, and occasionally gilt and decorated with little bells. A test of sobriety, therefore, came to be to drink from one of these vessels or jingle-boxes without producing a tinkling.

The word tankard as applied to drinking-vessels occurs for the first time in the later half of the sixteenth century, and later on we find many examples of tall tankards of ornate design. The most common and familiar article in the cottage of former days was the jug or pitcher of earthenware, often with a set of doggerel rhymes around its rim. One such mug of the peculiar putty-like colour so frequently imitated since bears an inscription telling us that—

This is Thomas Coxe's cup.
Come, my friends, and drink it up.
Good news is come'n, the bells do ring,
And here's a health to Prussia's king.

Another large mug of the famous Fulham brown stoneware is of the year 1740, and is inscribed with the legend, 'Walter Vaughan of Hereford. His mugg, must not be brock!' The beautiful glaze and polish which is a feature of the best pottery of the kind is due to the presence of salt in vapour in the kiln. The earliest notices of stoneware jars in this country occur in the first half of the sixteenth century, and we hear of many with silver covers and neck-mounts at that period, the jugs themselves being probably imported from Cologne. These old drinking-vessels are now very rare and fetch high prices, three stone jugs from the Staniforth collection being sold in 1889 for over three hundred and fifty pounds; while a good specimen of the year 1560, though of small size, realised seventy-one pounds in 1890.

YOUTH AND AGE.

NEW VERSION.

With anxious eyes and rigid arms,
With failing breath and odd grimaces,
I rob the cycle of its charms
In quiet places.

But, like a swift and sudden gust,
My grandson, with a smile seraphic,
Goes past me in a cloud of dust
To find the traffic.

He's just a shrimp a girl could toss;
His legs the size of Roman candles,
He wears them mostly thrown across
His battered handles.

At every hill where I dismount
He coasts—or, stay! I think it's 'cruises.'
One day I tried in vain to count
The youngster's bruises.

Ah me! but I am riding down
The Hill that leads into the Distance,
While he is rising to the crown
Of dear Existence.

A word while yet the pace is slow,
From one, my boy, who seldom meddles:
In tempting hills you do not know
Retain your pedals.

E. H. BEGBIE.



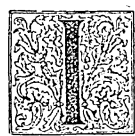
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SIXTH SERIES.



O I L.

By JULIAN CROSEY.



KNOW that the oil-fields have been described over and over again. I have myself read, years ago, in an old *Harper's*, an article on 'A Lampful of Oil,' which probably said all that the encyclopædias say; and

beyond a cursory visit to one or two oil-fields in the States and Ontario, and the gossip of old hands on the spot, I know nothing about oil. Nevertheless, and in spite of this, I am moved to make my own remarks on the industry, from the conceit that a novelist must necessarily have a novel point of view. Moreover, I am writing in Canada; and oil, trite old topic as it is, is beginning to be breathed of mysteriously as one of the new secret treasures of the frozen north. The north coast of Canada is destined to at least as much development as the north coast of Siberia. The world moves, wiping off the old areas and eras of discovery.

My first experience of oil was in China, where at one time it was my business to prepare returns of its importation into that country. Russian oil was then coming into the Eastern market; and it advanced by leaps and bounds, the competition lowering the price of American. Oil thus became the anti-friction advance-guard of civilisation in China. Its insinuating properties glided through the prejudice of centuries. It spread with a steady, rapid, imperceptible stealth into remote parts of that empire, carrying with it the practice and allurements of foreign trade. Lamp-oil and matches are probably the most widely used barbarian innovations in China.

In China, too, I first came into contact with oil-ships. Oil alone preserved a little longer the deep-sea sailor and the noble sailing-ship. Oil is a bulky cargo, and its market is certain and fairly steady in the East. It thus paid better to send it from New York and Philadelphia round Cape Horn, rather than overland by expensive freight train to San Francisco; and to make that long voyage it was necessary to do it cheaply.

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Steamers burn coal, and half their capacity is taken up with engines. Sailing-ships were therefore employed; and so a new impulse was given to shipbuilding, the largest four-masted ships in the world being turned out to carry oil, and fresh employment found for the sailor whose occupation was gone, unless he abandoned the 'sea' and shipped aboard a 'steamboat.'

Another very important economic growth, which, I believe, owes its origin to oil, is the 'combine;' I refer to the Standard Oil Trust (Rockefeller), which, if I am not mistaken, is the father as well as the leader of the huge modern monopoly organisations. Nothing but oil could have produced such an amalgamation, although wheat follows easily; and presently, I presume, we shall see all the tobacco in the world, from Cuba and Manila, as well as from Virginia and Carolina, handled by a single trust, which must surely this time call itself openly the Government. But neither wheat nor tobacco can ever be reduced to one market grade, such as the raw petroleum of Pennsylvania is. The origin of the great combine is common history, although I have not read or heard a definite acknowledgment that this economic system grew directly from physical needs. All the oil was virtually found *en masse* in a more or less level and united district, in the valley of the Alleghany River, between Bradford Field and Pittsburg. As prices went down, the need of economic working, transport, and storage was felt. It began, I believe, with an extended system of pumping worked by a single engine. In 1876 the United Pipe Lines Company was formed. Eight years later pumps, pipes, and tanks were amalgamated in the one company. The oil is now run direct to the ports of shipment by underground pipes, one hundred miles and seventy miles respectively, to Cleveland and Buffalo, on the shores of Lake Erie, for Western and Canadian consumption; and three lines each, from two hundred to three hundred miles long, to the ports of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, for export abroad. There

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SEPT 16, 1899.

was a talk of running a pipe under the Niagara to supply Canada; but whether it exists or not I have not inquired. I believe there were difficulties in the way of collecting duties.

My next experience of oil was in London, Eng. It is very painful to a Cockney to have to add 'Eng.' after the name of his Metropolis; and I move that the name of London, Ont., should be changed, as well as London, N.Z., &c. There should be but one London in the world, especially now we have imperial penny postage. Well, oil in London, Eng., does not admit of original remarks. Its price last year was sixpence, sevenpence, and tenpence a gallon; and the oils at sevenpence and tenpence were drawn from the same tank by two different pipes. It is a boon to the bachelor, both for light, heat, and cooking. But when I came to Canada, much poorer than I was in England, with six months of short days and cold winter before me, what was my dismay to find that the same oil, American refined, cost one shilling and threepence a gallon—that is to say, more than double the London price! And what is the reason of this absurdity, next door to the oil-country, and in a land where nearly every one is poor, and every one in need of large quantities of oil? Simply the old story of protection—the protection of 'home industries.' For, as an alternative to the dear American oil, you are offered Canadian oil, and that still at tenpence a gallon. Canadian oil I am therefore obliged to use, and my vexation does not diminish. With a very little provocation Canadian oil stinks and smokes, rendering the humble and useful half-crown oil-stove a 'deadly terror' in a small room. Full of indignation, I kicked over my stove and burnt my house down, and rushed off to discover where this abominable oil was produced, and, if possible, to torpedo the whole field. Now, therefore, my article comes up to date, and gets ahead of the encyclopædia. But I regret to confess that there is little novelty in the latest find.

The active Canadian oil-field is situated in the south-west extremity of the Ontario peninsula, near the American border at Detroit. It is also near London, Ont. Its centre is the town of Petrolia, and it is called, I believe, Sarnia Oil. It looks, I must confess, a big and thriving business; and with the present tariff protection, and until there is more competition from other native fields, it cannot fail to thrive—the climate, as I have said, demanding oil. The matter has brought home to me the inwardness of that still-vexed *Bermoothes*, the free-trade question. It is the same as agriculture in England. An important but quite local national industry thrives, while the people suffer considerably. Supposing that the oil consumed in England were produced in England, 'where would the Government be' if the price went up from sixpence to tenpence?

Petrolia has a population of about six thousand persons, four thousand of whom are probably

men working on oil. The Lambton district oil-field is thirty-five miles long by four wide. It contains over nine thousand wells, over each of which is a tripod derrick some thirty feet high. The appearance of the district is that of an enormous hop-field. The smell of sulphur, acids, and oil is felt while yet a long way off, and the rattle and screech of the unceasing 'jerkers' is painful to a delicate ear. These 'jerkers' are the pumps, a hundred wells being pumped by one engine by means of long connecting-rods. There are two or three hundred engines, the largest being, I believe, a hundred horse-power. The capital invested—most of it, like one's ancestors, underground—is currently estimated at some millions of pounds sterling; but, while it is undoubtedly a big, genuine industry, I am always willing to take salt with Canadian financial statements. The pioneers of Petrolia are, I believe, Messrs Fairbank and Fraser, M.P.'s who, I hope, have made a proper competence from their patriotic industry. They frankly confess, I hear, that the removal of the protective tariff would at once swamp Petrolia.

Oil always carries with it a host of satellite industries, and is therefore a splendid developing agency for a young country. Barrels, pipes, boilers, tanks, machinery, drills, carts, are necessary utensils, and their manufacture summons an industrious population. Hungry in pursuit of this population come other satellites, whose moral utility is so highly estimated in Canada that he would surely be an ill-natured sceptic who should insinuate anything to the contrary. Petrolia, accordingly, duly boasts a Methodist church, a Baptist church, a Presbyterian church, a Roman Catholic church, an Episcopal church, and a Salvation Army, and cordially supports their ardent representatives.

In farming, in the production of food-products, it is pleasant to see each family working its own farm; but the production of an article like lamp-oil is similar to the supply of water or gas. Now, at Petrolia the wells are divided up among some hundreds of small holders, who rent pumping-power and sell the crude oil to a number of rival refineries, who again tank independently. Under such a system the delicate processes of refinement and the utilisation of the precious wastes cannot be done to perfection at the lowest cost. The subdivision of ownership is seen by the eye in a minor form which is positively cheerful, homely, and amusing. You see labourers pumping away at little wells in their own back-gardens, as your city clerk rakes his flower-bed of a Sunday. Finally, the oil-beds of Lambton are poor, the majority of wells giving only half a barrel a day. I am not writing this article particularly to criticise Canadian oil. I am writing about oil, and Petrolia came in my way. I have an ardent enthusiasm about Canadian progress, and should be sorry to decry Canadian

industry. At the same time, public opinion is bottled up, and I assert that the oil is dear and short of perfect; and if, with protection, a better oil cannot be produced at a cheaper price, I say—abolish protection.

With that let us pass on. The most interesting thing about petroleum oil is its uses apart from the lamp. The best known of these uses was mentioned long ago by Marco Polo, who informs us that Batoum oil was used by the natives as a cure for dog-mange. Sixty or seventy years ago it was found by local American farmers to be a good embrocation for horses. For a long time Seneca oil was sold as a patent medicine for rheumatism. The common cheap oil, scented up a little, is still sold in patent bottles for the same purpose under a catching name. But every housewife by this time knows its useful properties, without buying it in bottles. Primarily, it is good for the hair—falling hair, scurvy hair, mangy hair. Dog-owners know its properties. A spoonful of oil in boiling water washes clothes; this the Chinese laundryman knows. It removes rust. It is good for sore throat and rheumatics. Internally, it cures or kills consumption. The French have recently discovered that it is a substitute for absinthe. I fancy manufacturers of 'Forty Rod' (whisky) credit it with spiritual properties. It lubricates. It makes wax vaseline, candles, chewing-gum. It gives anthracine, the basis of aniline dyes. And the greatest question of all awaiting solution is, Will it drive ships? As a matter of fact, it has driven Nobel's fleet on the Caspian for fifteen years.

Interesting, too, is the part it has played in religious superstitions. *Vide* encyclopædia. The only instances I remember are the common ones: Zoroaster and the fire-worshippers of Persia, and the pilgrimages still maintained by Hindus to the naphtha springs of Baku; the Seneca Indians, who applied torches to the gas and danced; the Athabasca Indians, who worship it best by cooking their pots over the gas-jets; capitalists and jobbers, who call it Mammon; and the poor man crouching over his half-crown stove.

As I write this I learn that oil has been put to a new use—that of 'metalling' dirt-roads. It is strange that its well-known cohesive property should only now be 'discovered'; we discovered it in China, as a coating for mud tennis-courts, years ago. The *Scientific American* states that Mr Rockefeller gave the engineer a tank of oil to experiment with.

Oil is like coal or water: you can never be quite sure where you will strike it, even on a well-defined bed. Drilling is therefore always going on, for a well soon runs dry, and there is always a chance of striking a gusher, or—in gold language—a pocket. There exists, of course, more than one rule-of-thumb, as well as scientific, theory for hitting it off, as there is for water. It may lie in streaks, belts, pools, or be evenly

distributed over a wide area. Here again divided ownership causes a great waste of capital, for in small holdings every man is anxious to tap a pool, which probably runs under his neighbour's acre, whereas under an amalgamated company wells can be sunk systematically when required. In the old days a man might comfortably ruin himself over a single well, the expense of boring costing about five hundred pounds, and the depth varying from fifteen hundred to two thousand five hundred feet; the time required for the operation was some weeks. Nowadays it takes about a week, and costs less, the operation of drilling having been brought to perfection, and being worked, of course, by steam-power. If the first layer of compressed sand is found dry, or has run dry, you call in the 'torpedo-fiend.' His charge is from five pounds to ten pounds. They use nowadays about thirty pints of liquid nitroglycerine and a time-fuse. Formerly you lowered your dynamite in tin cans, and dropped a ten-pound brick on it, an undertaking which was no doubt exhilarating to the 'fiend,' especially when four hundred pints was used, equivalent to five thousand pounds of gunpowder. The explosion is felt, not heard. If you have struck a pool it gushes, and before the system of drains and tanks was perfected a gusher could flood the whole town; and you had only to drop a match in it to see as pretty a conflagration as the Fire of London. Hundreds of barrels have been filled from a gusher in a few hours, which compares favourably with half a barrel a day. In the early days of speculation, if I remember rightly, such a torpedo would produce as instantaneous an effect on the market as on the well.

But I think the most interesting thing about Nature's fuel-stores is fire after all. Well, when an oil-tank gets on fire I forget how long it burns; but it is something like a volcano, and you just have to let it rip. But dribbled into a lamp it would burn for centuries. You can calculate this by seeing that a pint will last for about twelve hours to write by, and an average storage tank holds, I believe, about three hundred thousand pints. That would burn, then, cheerfully for a thousand years, I reckon. Spread along the ground the flame runs in a wall about ten feet high for the width of the street, and gobbles things up as it goes. Spread over the water it warns ships, and those down-stream always weigh anchor without customs formalities. Spread over its own sandy beds it flickers along the hillside in an everlasting blue, gaseous will-of-the-wisp; whether rain puts it out and lightning relights it is open to question. In this condition it is called naphtha springs and worshipped. In other parts you bore a hole and a good steady gas-jet comes up on which you can cook; this is how Indians use it, and Chinese also. The great manufactures of Pittsburg have been run entirely by natural gas, which is bored for separately

and conveyed in pipes, like oil. This gas, however, is part of the oil; its presence is necessary to force the oil up the well-tubes. Manufacturers who use gas are naturally anxious about its staying powers. That there is a very great deal of it has been proved in more ways than one. One unlucky borer struck a gas-gusher which filled the whole valley, and to get rid of it an ingenious boy had the happy thought of throwing a lighted tar-ball into the smoke. Need I go on? The nuisance was wiped out at once—and so was the valley. Several gas-wells have gone on 'blowing off' or 'spouting' for years without any apparent diminution, and it is the hardest thing in the world to get a 'reduced premium' of fire or life insurance there. One enterprising agent started 'drumming for lives' in a village one day, and drove as thriving a trade as a cure-all seller standing on a cart at a fair; but something gushed and drowned him, and his contracts were repudiated.

For other instances of the staying powers of Nature's fuel we must turn to coal. (See 'Derelict Ships' in *Chambers's Journal*, Jan. 20, 1894.) The *Ada Iredale*, iron coal barque, got a fit of spontaneous combustion in October 1876, and was deserted. In June 1877 the derelict was towed into port still burning. In May 1878 it at last 'burnt out,' and the iron shell was refitted as a ship. As with a tank, you can do nothing but let it burn out. The *John T. Berry*, by-the-bye, was an oil-ship; I forgot I had this instance in my note-book. She began burning in January 1888, and capsized in June. On the Mackenzie River there is a bed of lignite which has been burning for over one hundred years, the miles of smoke and vapour being visible to-day as they were to the discoverer of the river. I remember reading recently that a Staffordshire coal-mine has only just burnt out after a similar century of ignition.

In conclusion, I will add a few of those

gigantic statistics about the Standard Oil Trust which 'speak for themselves;' certainly they are not to be spoken about. They are quite the latest figures and fairly authentic. The latest achievement has been the securing control of all the Canadian wells, and as a result the price of oil was increased 43 per cent. This trust is also interested in a combination of seed-crushing oil companies in Great Britain.

Mr John D. Rockefeller, the founder of the company in 1870 or thereabouts, is computed at the present day to be worth about fifty million pounds. His assets in the Standard are put down at thirty million dollars. The Standard Oil Trust no longer exists, but has been dissolved and reorganised as The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, with a capital of one hundred and ten million dollars. Mr J. A. Rockefeller's younger brother, William, is president. The company employs twenty-five thousand men, whose weekly wages amount to seventy-five thousand pounds. It controls twenty-five thousand miles of pipe-lines, thirty thousand miles of railroad, two hundred steamers, seven thousand wagons, and three thousand tank-cars. It has forty thousand tanks, holding at any given moment over a thousand million gallons of oil. Over a million pounds sterling are spent every year in five-gallon export tins, and a like sum for locally-used barrels. This is an imposing *imperium in imperio*, and marks out Mr Rockefeller as a really great man. Unlike the Vanderbilts and Goulds, he has made his immense fortune—by far the greatest in the world—by himself alone. Mr Rockefeller's age is sixty, and he first engaged in oil in 1862. In 1870 he formed a local Standard. In 1880 the great society trust was organised. He is a tall, well-formed man, with a clipped moustache and a close-shut mouth, which has one characteristic. It tells his lifelong Napoleonic motto—'I undertake nothing in which I am not master.'

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER III.



HE lieutenant had just finished the story of how Torpedo-boat 240 came to her end, when the captain came into the cabin. 'Mr Winter,' he said, 'your boat is still towing astern; the sea is getting up fast, and I should say she will soon be swamped. It is scarcely worth while stopping to get her on board; indeed, it would be a dangerous business to send men down into her to hook on the falls. I should think we might as well cast her adrift.'

'Certainly, captain; even if you could get her up she would not be worth taking across the Atlantic and back again; but before you do so

I will write a line saying that all hands have been picked up by you, and will put it in a box or a bottle and drop it down into her; then, if she happens to be picked up by any homeward-bound vessel, it will relieve people's minds at home.'

'That is a very good idea,' the captain said. 'I will tell the steward to give you a tin biscuit-box; he can leave it half-full of biscuits so as to give it weight, and prevent the wind catching it as you drop it into the boat.'

Five minutes later the boat was hauled up alongside, and the box with its message dropped into it; a log of wood was then fastened to the

painter so as to keep the boat's head to the sea, and the rope dropped overboard. Contrary to expectations, the wind died down in the morning, and bright weather followed. The captain had told Winter that if they should pass a homeward-bound ship he would put him and the crew on board, but that it was scarcely likely this would happen.

'You see,' he said, 'the homeward-bound and outward-bound ships follow different courses, so as to reduce the chances of collision; besides, we are already north of the New York liners; we changed our course last night as soon as we had fairly passed Cape Clear. Generally we go north of Ireland, but it makes very little difference, and there was a large batch of emigrants ready to embark at Queenstown.'

'It was a very fortunate occurrence for us that it was so,' the lieutenant said. 'Personally, I do not object to a run across the Atlantic, and shall not grieve if we do not get a chance of being transferred into a homeward-bound craft, though I should like to pass within signalling distance of one, so that we might send back news of our being saved.'

'Well, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant asked as they walked up and down the deck after breakfast, 'do you still hold to your idea of having a private torpedo-boat on the Hudson?'

'Why, certainly; but I don't propose to go long voyages in her, Mr Winter, or to take the risk of running against floating timber. What a pleasant trip that was at Cork! What do you think—could I get such a boat built at home, or had I better have her out from England?'

'You would get one built out there, certainly, Miss Aspern; though I can't say whether you would get one quite so fast. You see, the making of these torpedo-boats is a speciality in the hands of two or three firms; either Thornycroft or Yarrow could turn out exactly what you want, guaranteed to run up to twenty or twenty-two knots an hour.'

'That would certainly be the best, Mr Winter. Of course I should not like anything to pass us; we hate being beaten in the States, you know. Could she be brought over on board a steamer?'

'Quite easily. If I were you I should have only the hull and engines from the English firm, and then you could have her fitted up according to your own fancy when you get her out. I know some of your American yachts are marvels in the way of decoration.'

And so passed day after day. Once or twice the smoke of a steamer was seen on the horizon; but none came within anything like signalling distance, and Winter was conscious of satisfaction that it was so.

'It would be much better for me if a steamer came along and took me back,' he said to himself. 'I am making a fool of myself here; it was all very well at Cork, where I thought it was not likely

I should ever see her again; but this is different. These sea voyages play the mischief with a man; and then she is wonderfully pretty and full of life, and those funny little bits of Yankee slang fetch one somehow. If I had met her at Plymouth, and she had been the daughter of a country parson or solicitor, or something of that sort, without a penny, and would have been willing to wait until I get my step, it would have been different; but I am not going to be fool enough to tell a girl whose father is worth millions, and who talks about spending eight or ten thousand pounds on a boat, as if she were buying a new bonnet, that I have been fool enough to fall in love with her. Not exactly. Well, there are only three or four more days of it, and I have had what she would call a good time, and it is well worth it even if I do feel bad later on.'

Two nights later Lieutenant Winter was leaning against the bulwarks smoking a cigar before turning in. They had just before dark sighted the low coast of Anticosti, upon whose dangerous shores innumerable vessels have been cast away; the next day they would be in the mouth of the St Lawrence, and another short day's steaming would take them up to Quebec. He was thinking that, after all, it would have been better if any other steamer than the *Manitoba* had picked them up. Suddenly he started. At a short distance he saw through the mist the outline and sails of a schooner, just on the vessel's beam. Another moment and there was a dull crash; he ran down below and knocked at the door of Mrs Aspern's state-cabin.

'Mrs Aspern, I think you and Miss Aspern had better put on your things again, and take two or three wraps, and come on deck; we have just been in collision with a small craft. I don't suppose there is much damage done; but there is nothing like getting ready, in case of anything having gone wrong.'

Then he ran up on deck again and hurried forward. The emigrants were pouring up in a state of wild panic, while the sailors were running out from the forecabin. 'Quartermaster,' he said as his own men appeared, 'keep the men together. I don't know that any damage is done; but if there is there will be a lot of trouble with these emigrants, so keep them together near the boats, and, if possible, keep the passengers from making a rush. I will be back again presently.'

He went to the side and looked over; there was no sign of the vessel that had so mysteriously appeared close at hand. She had doubtless dropped astern, while the way of the steamer had carried her on for some distance; but, looking down, he saw a great yawning hole in the ship's side; several of the plates had been stove right in, and a torrent of water was pouring in through the gap. He returned to his men, who were gathered in a group.

'Make your way aft, men; cut off the covers of the boats there, and swing them out ready for lowering; there is not a moment to be lost; the water is coming in like a sluice.'

The captain by this time was on the bridge, and shouting to the passengers to keep order, as there was no danger. Mr Winter bounded up the ladder to him.

'I have just been looking over the side, captain. There is a hole as big as a barn door. You won't float five minutes. I should advise you to get the boats down.'

'Are you quite sure there is no hope, Mr Winter?'

'Quite certain, sir.'

The captain leaned over the bridge and gave orders to two of the officers, who were trying to restore order, to lower the boats, and to make the sailors keep the passengers off, and let the women and children get in first. Short as was the time since the blow had been struck, the ship's head was already very perceptibly lower. Winter had again run down into the saloon, which was by this time full of terrified passengers.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said in a loud, clear voice that made itself heard above the confusion, 'I should advise you all to go on deck at once. The ship has received serious injury, and the crew are getting ready to lower the boats; pray enter them quietly—the ladies and children, of course, first; there will be plenty of time for you all to take your places if there is no crowding.'

There was a rush to the companion. At this moment Miss Aspern and her mother came out from the state-room.

'Is there really danger, Mr Winter?' the girl asked quietly.

'Yes, Miss Aspern; the ship won't float five minutes, perhaps not that; but the boats are being got out.'

They stood quiet for a minute or two, for the

companion was crowded with passengers struggling with each other in their eagerness to be first on deck. 'Now we can go up, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant said at last. On reaching the deck they found that a number of the emigrants had rushed aft, and that there was a wild struggle going on round the boats. These were already crowded, the seamen being overpowered with numbers.

'Stand here a moment,' Winter said, and pushed his way through the crowd. 'You fools,' he shouted, 'do you all want to be drowned together? Don't you see you are preventing the men from doing their work? Ah! there you are, quartermaster; now lower the falls away. Johnson and Harris, stand by me and keep off these cowards.'

Fighting desperately, the three men for the moment kept back the throng till the boat disappeared from view. Then the lieutenant leaned over the bulwark.

'Lie by for a moment, quartermaster; you must make room for two more ladies anyhow.' He then turned round and shouted, 'Make for the other boats; this is full.'

He rushed back, caught up Mrs Aspern in his arms, and, bidding her daughter follow, again made his way to the side. The boat was floating a few yards away.

'Here, boatswain, a little nearer.' Two men who had got out oars backed water, and he dropped Mrs Aspern into the stern; then he turned to look for her daughter, but she was nowhere near, having been swept away by the crowd of passengers who were rushing towards the boats on the other side.

'Where are you, Miss Aspern?' he shouted.

'Here,' she said, struggling through the crowd. He caught hold of her hand, and then suddenly stopped as he felt the deck rising below his feet.

'It is too late,' he exclaimed; 'over the side is our only chance.'

TOMB-OPENING.

By G. L. APPERSON.



HERE seems to be a fatality,' says Hawthorne in *Our Old Home*, 'that disturbs people in their sepulchres when they have been over-careful to render them magnificent and impregnable—as witness the builders of the Pyramids, and Hadrian, Augustus, and the Scipios, and most other personages whose mausoleums have been conspicuous enough to attract the violator.' And not only have the great ones of the earth been disturbed in their last repose, but some of them—Pharaohs and Ptolemies—have been ignobly exposed to the

gaze of the vulgar, and purchased by the cash of the curious.

Nor have the last resting-places of humbler folk enjoyed immunity from disturbance. Many graves have been opened by accident, many more of deliberate purpose. The opening of ancient barrows and mounds, and the digging in caves and other old-world burial-places, have added largely to our knowledge of the life and customs of our far-distant forerunners. Literature owes a debt also to at least one such opening, for the quaintly rich and stately prose of Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial* was inspired by the digging up of a

number of old Roman funeral urns in a field at North Walsingham, Norfolk.

As a rule the interest of such discoveries is purely archæological; but occasionally the long-buried relics of humanity, when thus dragged to light, have a strangely touching human significance. Some years ago Signor Rodolfo Lanciani described the discovery of a number of cinerary urns at Rome. Among them was one which contained the remains of a boy who had been page to the Emperor Tiberius. With the remains were the pathetic evidences of his childish tastes—fragments of a doll, a small chicken of terracotta, and other touching memorials of the boy's play-hours. In an ancient coffin unearthed by the same explorer, which contained the remains of a young bride who had been buried in her bridal dress and ornaments, were not only her earrings, necklace, and other jewellery, and various articles of her toilet, but also an 'exquisite little doll carved in oak.' Could anything more pathetic be imagined than the bringing to light of the doll, which some sixteen hundred years ago was placed by sorrowing friends beside the body of the dead child-bride?

The scientific interest connected with the opening of tombs, however, is a thing of very recent growth. The graves of the great and famous were opened in days gone by from motives of plunder or of curiosity, or sometimes simply with a view to the removal of the remains, for one reason or another, to some other place of rest. It was curiosity that made Alexander the Great open the tomb of Cyrus; and, to cover many centuries at a stride, it was curiosity which led to the opening, a few months ago, of the tombs of Rousseau and Voltaire in the Panthéon at Paris. With regard to these two prophets of the Revolution, there had long been a legend that at the restoration of the monarchy the remains of both Rousseau and Voltaire had been removed by night from the former church of St Gèneviève, placed in a sack, and thrown into a country ditch outside Paris. The opening of the reputed tombs in the Panthéon proved that this story was a delusion, for the remains of both philosophers were found and identified. It was known that the surgeon who made the *post-mortem* examination of Voltaire's body had sawn the skull through horizontally above the eyes, and the skull found in the Panthéon tomb was thus cut in two. Rousseau's skeleton was in good preservation, with the bones of the arms still crossed.

Tomb-opening sometimes leads to curious revelations. In 1165 Frederick Barbarossa caused the last resting-place of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle to be opened, and the dead emperor was found seated on a marble throne, with the imperial mantle about his shoulders. The Gospels were on his knees, and his sword by his side. The throne can still be seen at Aix-la-Chapelle; but

some of the other relics are now in Vienna. Another great emperor, Charles V. of Germany, has twice been disturbed in his burying-place. His original place of sepulture was a vault in front of the high altar in the church of the Escorial; but in 1654 his body and those of his descendants were removed to the Pantheon in Madrid. Sir William Stirling Maxwell has described the scene in his *Cloister Life of Charles V.* As the body of the emperor was placed in his marble sarcophagus, he says, 'the coverings were removed to enable Philip IV. to come face to face with his great ancestor. The corpse was found to be quite entire, and even some sprigs of sweet thyme folded in the winding-sheet retained, said the pious, all their vernal fragrance after the lapse of fourscore winters.' More than a century later the sarcophagus was opened to gratify the curiosity of Charles III. of Spain and his guest, William Beckford, the author of *Vathek*. The features were still unchanged, and the wild thyme was still fresh and sweet.

Occasionally actual desecration of the remains has accompanied the opening of tombs. When the body of St Teresa was restored to Alva by order of Pope Sixtus V. in 1586, it lay in state for some time before reinterment. A miraculous perfume is said to have emanated from the remains; and one noble spectator who managed to touch the saint's arm, and then feared to wash his hands lest the fragrance should depart, was delighted to find that no washing would affect it. One devotee took a finger of the corpse, and another a portion of skin. Later the saint was once more disturbed with a view to the remains being placed in a still more magnificent shrine; and again portions were removed as relics. The General of the Carmelites, who had come from Italy on purpose to be present, himself distributed these relics. One onlooker was made happy by a single finger-joint. 'The General himself,' says Froude, who has vividly described the ghastly scene, 'shocked the feelings or roused the envy of the bystanders by tearing out an entire rib. Then it was over, and all that remained of Teresa was left to the worms.'

In our own country not a few monarchs and men of note have been disturbed in their coffins. Nearly a century and a half ago the tomb of Edward I. was opened in Westminster Abbey, and Longshanks was measured and found to be six feet two inches in length. The body was wrapped in royal robes, studded with many pearls, with a crown of gilt metal on the head, and two sceptres of the same in his hands. The grave of an earlier Edward, the famous Confessor, in the same sacred building, has been opened thrice. The first occasion was in 1098, when Henry I., curious to know whether the Confessor's body remained incorrupt, had the tomb opened in the presence of Bishop Gundulf, who helped

himself to a hair drawn from the Saxon monarch's long white beard. Twice later, in 1163 and in 1269, the grave was opened for the purpose of removing the remains to a different position.

The body of another royal Edward, the fourth of the name, was viewed in 1789 by the curious eyes of Horace Walpole, who recorded that the waxen effigy of the king, then preserved according to ancient custom in the Abbey, was a satisfactory likeness. Horace carried off a lock of the monarch's auburn hair.

The coffin of a later and less fortunate king, Charles I., was discovered in a vault at Windsor in 1813, and was opened in the presence of George IV., then Prince-Regent; Sir Henry Hallford, the famous physician; and one or two others. Sir H. Hallford wrote a pamphlet describing the affair, which is probably familiar to many readers. The severed head, with the oval face and pointed beard as represented on the canvas of Vandyck, identified the remains beyond dispute. When the coffin was opened the left eye was full and open; but after a few seconds of exposure to the air it vanished. One or two small bones of the neck, left in Sir H. Hallford's hand when he replaced the head in the coffin, remained in the possession of his family until a few years ago, when they were given to the Prince of Wales, by whose directions they were taken back to the vault at Windsor and placed on the king's coffin, no further attempt being made to disturb the remains.

Among minor personages whose tombs have been opened may be named the Earl of Warwick, who was buried below the chapel he founded in the great church of St Mary's, Warwick. In this case the opening was due to accident. Long centuries after the earl's death the floor of the chapel fell through, and the stone coffin containing the remains was broken open. The body was thus suddenly exposed to view, and for a few minutes the bystanders gazed upon the long-buried earl, looking but slightly different from the appearance he had borne in life. The face was natural-looking, although the eyes were a little sunken. But exposure to atmo-

spheric influence swiftly did its work, and in a moment the features were dust, and nothing remained of the earl save his hair, which some of the ladies of Warwick are reported to have forthwith braided into rings and brooches for their own personal adornment.

The grave of Hampden was opened by his biographer, Lord Nugent, who wrote that 'the body was found in such a perfect state that the picture on the staircase of the house was known to be his from the likeness.' Doubts, however, arose later as to the correctness of this identification. The resting-place of the ancestor of the Earls of Bradford, the Lord-Keeper, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, in Teddington Church, was accidentally broken into by workmen in 1832, and the body was exposed to view. The then Lord Bradford was communicated with, and came down to Teddington to see the founder of his house. The body had been embalmed, and the face looked wonderfully fresh, with flowing hair and pointed beard. After this strange interview the coffin was closed and the vault bricked up.

In Tewkesbury Abbey quite a number of the old tombs have been opened, some in 1795, some in 1875. A fourteenth-century Lady Despenser, a twelfth-century Abbot Alan, and a Lady Isabel Beauchamp, who died in 1439, were among those upon whose remains the light of day was once more poured.

Many other instances might be cited, such as the transference of the remains of Robert Burns from the family grave to the mausoleum, and the disclosure of the last resting-place of Lady Dundee and Sir George Mackenzie, both of which instances have been already mentioned in this *Journal*. One of the most curious, perhaps, is the case of Ben Jonson. When his grave in Westminster Abbey was opened in 1849 it was found that the poet had been buried bolt upright, and the skull, with remains of red hair upon it, came tumbling down into the bottom of the grave! Well might Shakespeare invoke a dire curse upon him who should dare to violate the sanctity of his last resting-place—a curse which no one yet has ventured to draw down upon himself.

BILL GOLDIE: A PILGRIM.

By WILLIAM ATKINSON, Author of *Western Stories*.



WHEN Bill's father died the boy lost his best friend. Not that Bill's father was much of a man; he was not. He was morally and physically weak, while his wife was immorally and physically strong. But, to re-iterate: while Tom Goldie was his own worst enemy, he was his boy's best friend.

The life of Tom Goldie as a boy was so very different to that of his own son that it is worth a passing reference. His father (and grandfather too) was vicar choral of the grand old minster church in the little cathedral city of St Bedes, in rural England, where the atmosphere surrounding everything and everybody was ancient and venerable, but pure and good. Here, following in the

footsteps of his forebears, Tom Goldie at the tender age of seven donned a chorister-boy's surplice, and thereafter twice a day, summer and winter, year in and year out, he assisted in singing the services of the Church of England. At nine, when most boys were studying the three R's, Tom Goldie studied nothing but music. He could scarcely spell out the simple words of the Psalms; but he could read difficult music at sight, and his voice, thanks to Nature and his father's training, was as attractive and as wonderful as the voice of a lark on a June morning. At fourteen Tom's voice broke (after the manner of boys' voices), and then perforce he was absent from the cathedral for many years, and went to wrestle with grammar, geography, and arithmetic until such time as he developed a tenor voice that was as marvellously rich as his soprano had been wonderfully pure. And so again for several years the Goldies, father and son, continued to sustain the fame of the great choir of the great minster. After a time Tom married a pretty but giddy girl, who rapidly developed into a foolish, chattering, shrewish woman. But Tom managed very well to stand the trouble that came with his wife. He had his music to fall back upon, and he was always sure of relief twice a day when his duties as chorister called him to the shelter of the high-backed oaken pews, where the light fell so softly and soothingly through the gorgeous colouring of the chancel windows, and where the rich and restful tones of the grand organ lingered lovingly. And Tom forgave his wife all her foolishness, her scolding, and her wastefulness when she bore him a child—little Bill.

Baby Bill was the only being who really forced Tom Goldie to give up a share (and a very large share) of that love which had heretofore been bestowed exclusively upon music.

And poor Tom Goldie needed something to love—something upon which he might lay a tight hold—for his troubles came upon him in a heap. When little Bill was four years old Tom's father died, and the dean and chapter of the cathedral decided that they would have to appoint Tom Goldie to be the vicar choral, in succession to his father and grandfather. But that honourable and comfortable position, with its snug salary and roomy old residence in the Close, was not to be Tom's; for the poor fellow became ill and failed to grow better, until at last the doctors told him that his cough meant consumption, and that he must go to the Riviera or to Colorado if he would prolong his life a few years. So, as he could not afford the luxury of a residence upon the shores of the Mediterranean, and judged that he might more easily make a living in the Far West, he packed his belongings, bade a sad farewell to peaceful St Bedes, and with the wife who tormented him more than his cough, but also with his beloved little Bill, journeyed to the notorious, crowded, and bustling mining town of Leadison, Colorado.

It goes without saying that Tom Goldie did not

pursue his vocation at Leadison, for not a single place of worship graced that Sodom of the West, and not so much as a Salvation Army bass drum or tambourine sought to remind men of the religion of their youth. But there were saloons in plenty, with annexes of all varieties—concert-rooms, dance-halls, gambling dens, and resorts where infamous women lured the miners to share their own fearful degradation.

For a time Tom's health seemed to improve, and as long as his voice held out he was the star attraction at the Alhambra, the best (save the mark!) of the poor concert-halls in Leadison. Then, when his voice again departed—this time for ever—and the cough returned, with a full determination of staying with him to the end, the poor fellow went down several notches at once to play the tin-pan piano at 'McCorquodale's Occidental Dancing Academy for *Ladies and Gentlemen!*'

All this time Tom was making a very precarious living, and things gradually went from bad to worse. His wife was not the woman to endeavour to brighten the outlook for her husband and boy, or even to face the future philosophically herself. As a girl she had been vain of her admittedly beautiful face, and also giddy and foolish; as a woman she had developed a bad temper as well as much laziness, and imagined herself thrown away upon Tom Goldie. Doubtless, had they all remained at St Bedes, and had Tom become vicar choral at the minster, Nellie Goldie would have been fairly well satisfied with the mild dignity of her husband's position in the church and the musical world.

He would have supported her well, and she would have been without excuse upon that score for swerving from the duties of married life. At Leadison she really had the excuse of poverty, and was surrounded by other strong temptations. Therefore, of this frail woman the less said the better. When, many years after, she was shot in a disreputable resort, few could have recognised beneath the rouge upon her face the features of the pretty Lincolnshire girl who married the first tenor of St Bedes.

And what of little Bill? He too found a vast difference between St Bedes and Leadison. He missed his little playmates and his grandparents. His tender childish heart yearned for the old home-life, with its simplicity and regularity that not even hinted of monotony to him. His memory dwelt frequently upon the towering gray minster which he had often entered with his father, only to sit alone and unseen, and to wonder if heaven itself held anything more beautiful to look upon than the wonderful stained-glass windows, or could give forth sounds more enchanting than the music of the great organ or of the hymns and anthems sung by the white-robed choristers. Poor little Bill! He could have got over all reminiscent heartaches with a few childish tears; but before

he was six years old the iron entered his very soul when he realised that the chief difference that had come into his life was the sad change in both of his parents. His mother looked upon him as an encumbrance, and the boy felt it intuitively. At first she merely neglected the little fellow. Soon she greeted him only with rough and unkind words. Later on she administered hard blows with increasing frequency, and at last she practically deserted the child.

To the matter-of-fact reader it may not seem a logical sequence that because the boy's mother changed for the worse his father should also degenerate. And yet, when you come to think of it, such a condition of affairs would be very natural; and in reality Tom Goldie (notwithstanding the years of daily precept read and expounded by the clergy of St Bedes to which he had listened—rather feebly, no doubt—twice a day for twenty years) lost his health, lost his wife, and 'lost his grip.' At Leadison his daily environment was bad; men and women gave him only cheap sympathy; and their charity, when it exceeded empty words, seldom bestowed upon the broken-down chorister more than a drink of kill-me-quick whisky. But of this, the miners' specific for drowning sorrow and hard luck, Tom Goldie imbibed far too much, and gradually developed into a sot.

He knew it. He hated himself; he hated the wretched life that he was leading; he hated his wife; but right on to the miserable end he loved his boy. Tom Goldie never failed to provide little Bill with food and clothing, and even purchased for him such toys as could be obtained at Leadison. Every night, after the piano at M'Corquodale's became silent (generally because the 'ladies and gentlemen' were no longer in a condition to keep time with their feet), no matter if drunk or how drunk, Tom would creep up to sleep with the boy, whose appreciation of his father's faithfulness, in spite of whisky, outweighed his dislike for the fumes of vile liquor.

There was a hymn which had always been Tom Goldie's favourite in the old St Bedes days—days now almost blotted out for him—and because it had been Tom's choice hymn (which he had many a time, when his voice was equal to that of any cathedral singer in England, sung at the side of little Bill's cot) it had become the favourite of his child. Tom had forgotten, or had attempted to forget, all about hymns and the old peaceful life which they were apt to recall; he could not sing them, anyway, now that his tenor voice was supplanted by a distressing cough. But Bill did not forget; and during the long hours that he passed alone each day he furbished up his memory and practised that beautiful hymn about the Pilgrims of the Night. Then one evening, when Tom Goldie crept up to their room earlier than usual, and more nearly sober than he had been for many a day, Bill

sang their old-time favourite, and surprised the wretched, dying man, who sat and listened and wept.

There was another cause for Tom's tears besides the mere fact that the floodgates of memory were unlocked; it was then and there revealed to him that little Bill had inherited the wonderful musical voice and ability of all the Goldie boys for generations past, a voice which would be fully appreciated could the child only be got back to St Bedes or some other cathedral city.

So after the hymn was ended Goldie took his child upon his knee and told him, if aught happened, that he was to remember above all things that his home was at St Bedes in England, and that he was to be a chorister; and then they talked together about the wonderful music of the far-away old minster, and that night little Bill and his father both fell asleep to dream of St Bedes, with its resounding organ and white-robed choristers.

Two months later Tom Goldie died, and the cost of his funeral was defrayed by a collection taken up at the music halls and dance-houses of Leadison. There was a surplus of a few dollars, which was turned over to little Bill Goldie, now seven and a half years old; for in a Western mining town even a cut-throat or horse-thief would scorn to rob an orphan child.

Nellie Goldie was not at the funeral, and the boy did not seek her. His childish mind was fully made up. He was going to St Bedes. He did not know that more than two thousand miles of land and three thousand miles of water intervened; but he knew the distance was great. So he made his plans after inquiring as well as he knew how of a few kindly neighbours. A small handful of dimes and quarters he kept in his pocket for the purchase of food; all the larger coin that had been turned over to him he took to the railroad agent and asked for a ticket to New York. But the agent smiled grimly, and explained that his money would only buy a ticket as far east as Omaha; so Omaha, nearly a thousand miles from Leadison, was the end of little Bill's first stage on his long pilgrimage to St Bedes, and from Omaha the lad figured that he would have to walk to New York.

So across the prairies of Iowa he trudged, past the broad but sluggish Mississippi and into Illinois; faring well enough at the hands of the farmers, who never refused the little pilgrim a bite or a place to sleep. But when, after four months of tramping, with now and then a lift in a country wagon, Bill found himself in the great, noisy, hustling, overgrown city of Chicago, it was different. There seemed to be so many other poor and lonely boys in Chicago that the people had very little time for him; while the big police officers looked at him so severely that Bill felt sure they wanted to lock him up or chase him out of town.

It seemed to a small boy like Bill Goldie to take so long to pass through the city. The first day after he found himself among the houses and stores and upon the wooden side-walks he tramped on and on, and at night crept into a shed to sleep in an empty wagon. He thought surely that the second day would see him through Chicago—for Bill much preferred the corn-fields and grass land of the prairies to the big rows of houses; besides, there were no harsh-looking policemen on the country roads. But he plodded on, and at the close of the second tiresome day, instead of finding the open country, the city became more and more dense; the rows of houses changed to monster piles of 'sky-scrapers,' which caused Bill to twist his neck quite painfully when he attempted to count the number of stories they contained; the scattered and rather shabby shops and stores of the suburbs and outlying districts were now exchanged for solid streets of great plate-glass windows, finely decorated and, toward evening, brilliantly illuminated with electric light. The streets were choke-full of vehicles, and the ceaseless sounding gongs of the cable and trolley cars were confusing in the extreme to the little pilgrim. And right at every street corner stood a helmeted police officer with any number of brass buttons and—a club! Poor little Bill Goldie! He was so very lonely among all those throngs of hurrying people, and it seemed so strange to him that he should have to crowd his way through such a hurly-burly place as Chicago to reach so quiet and restful a destination as the ancient cathedral city in the English fen country. Several times he felt as if he would like to give up his toilsome journey to creep into some dark corner and go to sleep never to wake up. Then he would think of the dear old hymn that his father taught him, and Bill Goldie counted himself in with the pilgrims of the night for whom the angels were ever singing a welcome, as he hummed, over and over: 'Onward we go, for still we hear them singing.'

The music of his own voice sounding the notes of his old favourite braced him up a little, and presently he had the courage to ask an old woman, who sat on the curb-stone selling pencils and chewing-gum, how far it was to New York. And when she squeaked out that it was just about a thousand miles, as near as she could remember, Bill's courage fell once more, and it took quite a few moments of thought about St Bedes before the lad could think of that long distance with equanimity. And then he comforted himself by softly singing another stanza of his pilgrim song:

Far, far away, like bells at evening pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea;
And tired souls by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee.

All at once the boy found himself in State Street, the showiest, noisiest street of the city,

and then a sudden impulse seized him, which he acted upon immediately. It was still early in a cool but clear fall evening; pedestrians were promenading the brilliant thoroughfare by thousands—many of them wending their way to the theatres and other places of amusement—the very best of them being bound for the great auditorium where a celebrated prima donna from Europe was to entertain them. Suddenly, at the corner of State and Jackson Streets, where the electric lights sparkle and gleam, and where the throng is thickest, the perfect, clear soprano tones of a child's voice ascended; and in less than one minute many hundreds of people stood massed about little Bill Goldie, as, bare-headed, he stood on the curbing and sang, as carefully and as clearly as if he had been in the chancel of St Bedes Cathedral, the 'Pilgrims of the Night.'

When he ended there was no applause, but there were a great many moist eyes, which signified that the child had moved natures that could not have been touched by celebrated artists or world-renowned orchestras; and Bill the pilgrim discovered, as men and women pressed towards him with coin and greenbacks, that there were many kind hearts among the hustling people of ever-busy Chicago. For when the little fellow counted the money thus bestowed he found upon inquiry that he had sufficient to purchase a ticket to New York, and just one dollar left over to pay for his slender meals.

But Bill never had the nerve to sing again on a public highway; the impulse only came to him once.

Two days later found our young traveller at the seaboard, his long overland journey ended; and now he haunted the New York docks in search of a steamer on which to ensconce himself as a stow-away. By this time Bill Goldie was almost eight years old, though the poor little chap felt much older. He could read fairly well, and as he wandered along the miles and miles of docks he deciphered the names of the great steamers and sailing-ships. There were the monster liners from Liverpool and London and Glasgow, which stood out of the water to such a great height as to convince the boy that it would be useless to attempt to crawl into those floating hotels without being observed. Many sailing-vessels, with their ropes and spars, seemed to offer special inducements for boarding them unperceived; but Bill knew that sails were slower than steam, so passed them by. Finally his inclinations narrowed down to two big freighters, which he learned were about ready to put to sea—the *Queen of the Mersey* of Liverpool, and the *Sarah Jane* of Hull. He asked a sailor-man to tell him which was nearer to St Bedes—Liverpool or Hull—and the man, being from Glasgow, said the only saints he 'kenned' were St Andrew and St Enoch; but, drawing a bow at a venture, thought Hull might be a 'wee bit' nearer.

So that night, having spent his last few cents for a paper bag of hard biscuits by way of victuals for the sea voyage, Bill, feeling like a culprit, sneaked aboard the *Sarah Jane* and stowed himself in the hold among thousands of sacks of flour and potatoes, and likewise thousands of rats.

The poor fellow had some idea of making himself known, and throwing himself upon the tender mercy of the captain and crew after the steamer got well under way; but when at daybreak he heard the clank of loosened chains and the shrieking and puffing of the tug which pushed the *Sarah Jane's* nose out of her dock, and above all the awful swearing of the mate and the boat-swain, Bill concluded that he would rather endure hunger and solitude and rats than come in contact with such rough and blasphemous men as seemed to be in charge of the *Sarah Jane*.

The old freighter plugged along at the rate only of seven or eight knots an hour, so that it was more than two weeks before she arrived at her destination; and during all that time the lad never left his hiding-place except three or four times, when, in sheer desperation, he crawled on deck in the dead of night to obtain a drink of water for his parched lips. His bag of dry biscuits he eked out by the aid of some of the raw potatoes; but after the first day or two his appetite failed and he did not feel particularly hungry. But the bad air, the confinement, the fear lest he might be discovered, and his general weariness and exhaustion gradually told upon him; and when the *Sarah Jane* headed into the English Channel, Bill had no desire for food of any kind—only for water. He was in the throes of a high fever, although he did not know it, and would probably have succumbed very speedily, only that, when in the darkness he crawled to the water-cask, he noticed lights along the shore (for they were near Falmouth), which gave the little fellow courage to hope on—even though he was ignorant as to whether it would take two hours or two days to reach Hull. As a matter of fact it was two days before Bill, now very weak indeed, heard the hustle and bustle of tying up to the dock, and then he braced himself by a great effort and crept ashore.

The poor fellow did not know that could he but cross the Humber to Grimsby he might save many miles of tramping; but his spirits had already risen; so, weak and weary though he was, he asked for the road to St Bedes, and set out upon his last stage—a walk of more than a hundred miles. He had to beg for all his meals now; but none refused the pale-faced, ragged, and evidently sick little wanderer, and many a Lincolnshire housewife invited him in to rest. With some of them he might have stayed indefinitely; but Bill Goldie had only one object in view: he must reach St Bedes, his old home—his only home, the one place on earth of which he knew where a

Goldie and a musical voice would be appreciated; if they would take him and make him a chorister in the well-remembered and well-beloved old minster, it was all that Bill would ask of God or man.

So on he plodded, until one damp November morning, when towards noon, the sun having cleared away the fog, he saw a short distance ahead the gray towers of St Bedes Cathedral!

The boy's heart gave a bound, and a strange light in his great eyes illumined with a holy joy of sublime satisfaction the haggard little face.

There before him, almost within reach, was the goal towards which his footsteps had been bent and upon which his mind had been set for six long months. To reach it he had jolted over Western railroads and tramped across a thousand miles of prairie, had been jostled through the streets of Chicago, and had endured cruel confinement in the hold of an ocean steamer. His limbs ached and his feet were sore, but his pain and weariness were quite forgotten as he now pressed forward to reach before nightfall the shelter of those venerable walls.

At four o'clock that afternoon Bill Goldie dragged himself into the minster and seated himself in one of the old oaken pews, where in days gone by he had often waited for his father. Although it was the hour for evensong the great church was only dimly lighted, for but very few people attended the weekday services. Shortly the beautiful tones of the organ softly sounded forth until they filled every nook and corner of the minster; then from the vestry-room emerged the chorister boys and men of St Bedes singing sweetly—oh, joy for Bill Goldie!—the 'Pilgrims of the Night.' And as they sang the hymn with which the tired little traveller had charmed the side-walk audience in Chicago, the boy was overcome with a sense of restful happiness, and passed into a half-unconscious doze, lulled by the words which arose from the choir and filled the cathedral to its groined roof:

Rest comes at length, though life be long and dreary,
The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;
All journeys end in welcome to the weary,
And heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last.
Angels, sing on! your faithful watches keeping;
Sing us sweet fragments of the songs above,
Till morning's joy shall end the night of weeping,
And life's long shadows break in cloudless love.

The lad was fast asleep when they locked the minster for the night; and in the early morning, when the old verger and his wife came in to do the daily dusting, they found the little boy still slumbering. For Bill Goldie had passed from the minster that his childish heart had loved so well to the land where 'they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

THE ATLANTIC PASSAGE TO-DAY.

BY AN OLD TRAMP.



My first voyage to America was made in the little—even then old-fashioned, and now discarded—*Marathon*, and it was the only really tempestuous experience I ever had on the ocean, though I have sailed the Indian Ocean and crossed the Atlantic by all the leading lines which have been running vessels from Liverpool, Southampton, and Glasgow since the 22d of December 1874, when I took passage in the steerage of the *Marathon* for Boston.

When I sailed by the sailor-like, broad-beamed *Marathon*, the Cunard vessels provided no second-class accommodation, and the steerage was of the ordinary rough description written up—or, rather, down—time and again by a succession of discontented travellers. I bought my bed and bedding and table equipage of tin on the wharf. My mattress, with its attached pillow, was made of cork and shavings, and I was told encouragingly by the vendor that it would serve excellently as a life-preserver in case of necessity—a recommendation that availed but little in the night-watches, when a sack of Bermuda potatoes would have served the purpose of a bed quite as well. Our food, coarse but plentiful of its kind, was literally thrown at us three times a day by the steerage stewards, who regarded us as beings of an inferior order to themselves. All the way we had to struggle against terrible headwinds and heavy, rolling white-capped seas; and for two whole days the ship laboured so heavily and shipped so many seas that we steerage passengers were battened down under hatches in the cold and darkness of our dismal den, where, as ever and anon our ship listed heavily, we could hear the tremendous thump overhead as a sea weighing tons fell on the deck; this would be accompanied by a deafening noise of smashing crockery aft of us, mingled with the wild, hissing swish of the seething waters as they rushed past our closed port-holes, and the roaring of the blast in the rigging, the shrill call of the boatswain's whistle, piping all hands to trim some sail or secure the floating wreckage on the swamped deck. For that was the era of sails as well as of sailors on board a big steamship; and we, who were barque-rigged, were well provided with both.

There are few sailors on board a liner nowadays; they are not required, except as quarter-masters or steersmen. The *Germanic* and *Britannic* of the White Star Line, as well as the vessels of the Glasgow lines, carry some canvas on their spars for steadying purposes; but all these ships belong to a *passé* stage in the evolution of the ocean steamship. And on the very biggest of the

Atlantic boats—and they are the biggest afloat: the *Campania* and *Lucania*, not to mention the lately launched *Oceanica*, being each 12,950 tons—there are not fifty sailors aboard.

Before a ship starts her crew is mustered. All in a row they stand, that the owners may see what manner of men they are; and in that long rank of two to four hundred men and boys the thoroughbred sailors require looking for. In these transition days the crew of a passenger vessel consists mainly of so-called 'idlers'—idlers who are in constant work; and though all employed on board earn their livelihood on the sea, not a fifth of them are regarded as seamen or draw a quarter of the wages. Half the crew are employed in the engine-room or its belongings; the other half are in the saloons and on the deck; and the stewards alone are to the sailors as three to one. The sailors, including the officers, have rarely begun life on a steamboat. They have nearly all served their time on sailing-vessels; and on the principal lines a very large number of the crew have been taught in the Royal Navy, and left it when at the close of their twelve years their country had thought it wise to let them go adrift in order that they may spread among the masses a few notions of discipline and efficiency; and there is no doubt that they do this, and that the more there are of them the better for both services. For in these days an able seaman in the navy has to know as much as a lieutenant did fifty years ago. He is the best-trained sailor afloat, and is, as a rule, to the rank and file what a skilled mechanic is to his labourer.

There are few more interesting scenes than the departure of one of the larger passenger boats from the docks at Southampton or Liverpool on Wednesday or Saturday. You have often heard of it, perhaps; but go and see it just as a boat is getting under way, as a bystander with no personal interest in any one aboard—you will appreciate it all the more, and you will not have to wait so long. Up goes the gangway, and there she floats, a world in miniature, kept in place only by gravitation. She is loaded down to her limit, and her decks fore and aft are alive with passengers, first class, second, and third. There is little movement, but plenty of excitement on the ship and on the shore; both crowds are ready to laugh or cry at the least incident. Shouts there are, mostly congratulatory; some of sadness, some otherwise; a good deal of human nature, and not a little humour of the gallery sort. Notice how order begins to reign as soon as the last rope is dropped and how the ship, after the snorting little tug has swung her off

from the wharf, seems to straighten herself up for her march past the line of shipping in the harbour. In the first hundred yards you will have left off watching her passengers to pick out her officers at their posts—the first officer in the bow, the second aft, the captain on the bridge, with the pilot close at hand. For a minute or so, while the screw gives a churn, churn deep down, there is a fight between steam and stream; but steam wins, and slowly, very slowly at first, and under her own steam, the ship begins to move. Good-bye! good-bye! The last link has been broken. Faster glides the ship, surely but imperceptibly increasing speed as she moves out, while innumerable fluttering handkerchiefs are waving farewell and a blessing from ship and shore.

Formerly you had to find your way to the port of departure as best you could; now you begin your passage in London. The Midland and North-Western were the first to foster this kind of traffic with the Liverpool boats; but now the Great Eastern and South-Western are more largely concerned in it—especially the latter, which has seven or eight special boat-trains out of Waterloo every week—with the object, of course, of showing that for all practical purposes Southampton is as near London as the Albert or Tilbury Docks.

In these days of competition the passenger is not easily or inexpensively caught. The advertisements, avowed and otherwise, thought necessary to attract his attention cost a small fortune; and agents are spread widely over the land, often out of all proportion to the population around. And when the passenger is safe on board his ways must be made smooth for him, and he must be treated tenderly and considerately—even as a steerage passenger—or his friends 'try the other line.' Most of the large lines have the credit of introducing some innovation that has increased either the facilities of navigation or the comfort of the passengers. The Inman Line was noted in its day for its comfortable intermediate (now called second cabin) accommodation. The White Star Line was the first to abolish the cumbersome bowsprit, in the interests of speedy dockings; it took the lead also in placing the saloon amidships, where the motion of the vessel and the vibration of the screw—or now rather twin screws—is least felt. But it was the American Line which, with the usual Yankee enterprise, first brought in two improvements the want of which had long been felt. They began to run their special trains to the very gangway of the incoming or outgoing boat, compelling the Cunard and White Star lines in a short time to follow suit, or 'get left;' and they made such alterations in their steerage that the old bad system has already become matter of ancient history on all the lines, which now furnish their third-class passengers gratis with all necessities for the voyage, as

well as with better accommodation and general treatment.

The Cunard Line has the finest second cabin accommodation of all. In fact, the now second cabin on the three big lines is but a modified and less luxurious saloon, whereas on some of the smaller lines it is but a superior steerage costing six pounds, the steerage being five; while on the big liners the steerage costs five pounds ten shillings and the second cabin from eight pounds eight shillings upwards. I sailed in the second cabin of the *Campania*, in the summer of 1893, to New York, when that boat was crowded with Europeans on their way to the Chicago Exposition, and I could not see how in anything that regarded comfort, or even luxury, the saloon passengers could be better treated than we were—always excepting the exclusiveness so dear to some people, but which to the cosmopolitan traveller is a bar to the enjoyment of the voyage rather than an advantage.

But in the matter of steerage improvement, though desirable alterations, especially in regard to separate and well-furnished bunks, were introduced some years ago by the White Star Line on the *Teutonic* and *Majestic*, and more recently still on the 'half-breed' steamer *Cymric* (which has no second cabin) by the addition of a comfortable smoking-room for the steerage passengers—hitherto relegated to the deck for the enjoyment of the weed—the two new boats of the American line, the *St Paul* and the *St Louis*, which first took the water in 1895, easily 'take the cake,' to use the nigger slang phrase.

Of course when these boats, the *St Louis* and *St Paul*—the *Paris* and *New York* being the two Inman liners of that name, curtailed of the old company badge 'City'—are crowded with emigrants, many compartments of a rougher sort have to be opened to receive them; but the steerage proper, or steerage cabin, which is large enough to accommodate all the passengers coming from the American side, is a solid fact that will bear investigation. A finely carved walnut-wood bannister guards a companion-way whose steps are ribbed with shining brass bands; comfortably bedded state-rooms for two, four, and six persons, each room completely isolated from its neighbour on each side, and provided with clothes-pegs, a seat, and an electric light; plenty of light and comfortable sitting accommodation in the main or dining cabin, round which these cosy little bunks are arranged, and screened off from view at the occupant's pleasure by a neat bar-and-ring curtain; a well-furnished table with white tablecloth and bright dinner-service on it, and stewards who know better than to treat too superciliously any of the passengers sailing under *that* flag—these are some of the features of the steerage of the American liners *St Louis* and *St Paul*, on both of which I had experience of it.

Whenever it is possible the British and

American elements in the steerage are segregated from the other nationalities, except perhaps the German, who, being more akin than the others to his Anglo-Saxon fellow-passengers, and seeming to have a miraculous gift of speedily learning their language, easily falls into their ways. With the Italians, who are increasing year by year in numbers and in influence in America, the case is different; the Scandinavians, on first going out at least, are very clannish, and keep their own company; while the Finns, a rough and loud-talking but exceedingly good-natured folk, are so much addicted to munching the raw herrings with which the companies liberally supply them, at all hours of the day and night, that a passenger who misses a berth in the main steerage, and is thus driven to herd with them, is likely to have a sufficiently unpleasant time of it. But all those nationalities are desirable emigrants in Uncle Sam's eyes, as also is, of course, the Irishman who, knowing his way about, sticks fondly to New York or one of the other large cities, and becomes a policeman or a politician, or both in one. The Norwegians and Finns, and many of the English and Germans, make their way to the great West, where they, with the ever-westward moving down-east Yankee, form the bone and sinew of the farming population of the Republic.

It is demanded of every emigrant, unless a friend or relation claims him (or her) on landing at Castle Garden, where often as many as three thousand emigrants in a week are sorted and forwarded to their various destinations, that he show himself to be possessed of at least six pounds; but this provision is often winked at by the discriminating officer in favour of any able-bodied English-speaker. If, however, a young man without the requisite six pounds pass-money to show on landing wishes to make sure of not being rejected, all he has to do is to engage a second cabin passage in one of the Glasgow boats, which costs only ten shillings more than the steerage on the English lines, and then he can step ashore at New York without any questions asked, for the second cabiner is not counted among the emigrants, even though he may be one. Despite this money qualification, the tide of emigration has not been lessened; and the American Government, often at its wits' end, every now and again moves helplessly to impose some new restriction, such as the ability to read and speak the English language. These poor oppressed wretches of the Nearer East manage to scrape the six pounds together somehow, perhaps starving themselves for years to do so. I have seen a Polish Jew, with hardly a rag to his back, and a few belongings tied in a bit of dirty canvas, fork out his pass-money at once, at the wicket of the Barge Office, Castle Garden—a place where on landing-days, with the emigrants of three or four incoming

steamers to be handled, is presented a scene of hubbub and confusion such as has not its like in the world.

Goethe puts into the mouth of one of his characters in *Wilhelm Meister* the following sentiment: 'Since Time is not a person whom we can overtake when he is past us, let us honour him with mirth and cheerfulness of heart while he is passing.' Always excepting a certain proportion of the passengers who are doomed, even in fine weather, to be afflicted with sea-sickness, this strikes the prevailing note on board a Transatlantic steamer when well under way. Some people find time heavy on their hands when they are at sea. It is apt to be so unless one makes friends with one's neighbours, or is prepared beforehand, like Macaulay, with a library to be digested during the passage. Upon the whole, it is much better, as well as easier, to chatter idly, or read for diversion, or, better still, to lounge about doing nothing at all, than to undertake a course of study at sea. The idleness of the sea is charming, and work, except at the dinner-table, is not to be endured. Besides, it is wonderful what a stock of information it is possible to acquire in a week's voyage to New York if you are lucky in your selection of temporary intimates.

The steerage passengers have hearts like the rest of the world, and they make themselves merry on deck in the evenings in their own way. They trill forth 'In the sweet By-and-by,' or 'Home, sweet Home,' or 'There is a Land,' or mayhap 'Two Little Girls in Blue,' with a most disastrous amount of sweetness and pathos. It needs no wizard to know that their eyes are moist as they gaze upon the stars or upon the darkening waste of waters, flecked with the foam of the white horses, while sitting side by side, hand-in-hand, or with the old folks of their parties pillowed against their strong pliant bodies—all thus going into exile.

When everything else palls, there is one subject which is of perennial interest at sea, and that is the daily 'run,' with its corollary, the record of the route; which topic is officially encouraged as much as possible by the presentation of the passenger list and pocket chart. On these points the old voyager and the well-primed first-crosser have much to say. You will hear the well-worn tale of the Atlantic from the earliest period, from the last paddle-boat, the *Cunard Scotia*, which brought the record down to nine days, down to the successive feats of the *Britannic*, the *Arizona*, the *Alaska*, the *Umbria*, the *Oregon*, and the *City of Paris*, which latter brought it within six days, till we come to the *Campania* and *Lucania*, *Teutonic*, and *St Paul*, of our own days, which run so closely that the difference of time between their performances is but the fraction of an hour. And you will hear that it could soon be done in five days were it not for

the price of coals; and, more extraordinary still, that it may be done in four and even in three, when the Grand Canadian Pacific scheme comes off, by which the boats are to run to Louisburg. And the mention of the Cape Breton haven of promise will naturally lead on to the St Lawrence records, which the ill-fated Dominion liner *Labrador* was lowering hour by hour before she met with disaster among the Hebrides.

It has become a truism that a great ocean liner is a little world in itself, its human freight consisting often of considerably over a thousand souls—literally all sorts and conditions of men. There is no place in the world like the deck of an Atlantic liner on a fine day for studying the dispositions, manners, and foibles of your fellow-creatures. Every race and nationality in Europe is represented in the well-ordered crowd with which you mingle so freely. Leaving out the two upper sections, if you are travelling westward in the steerage, which may be called the great nursery of the naturalised American citizen of the future, you will find yourself among rough, ungainly, undeveloped men and women. Coming back, say a few years afterwards, you will meet these same people, or people like unto them, returning on a long-yearned-for visit to the old home, but so transformed by the influences and experiences of their new free life in the boundless West that the difference is best expressed by saying that the eastward-bound steerage passengers are many degrees more advanced in the social scale, more alert-minded and resourceful, as well as better provided with the good things of life, than those travelling in the same class westward.

Thus, in alternate pleasant converse and indolent, restful longing, the days slip half-dreamily by till we reach the Banks of Newfoundland, where we are intermittently enveloped in chilly, shifting fogs for a day or so, and then our brave ship's prow is turned southwards, and we soon gain a warmer, serener latitude, with the blue American dome overhead, and our port not far distant on our starboard bow. The last day of our voyage comes in due time; and as soon as we are well in the Hudson, and begin to recognise the old landmarks of the American shore, the old forces of civilisation return to take up their abode with us. We stop off Quarantine at Staten Island while the Government medical officer comes on board and rapidly but keenly scrutinises the steerage passengers. This inspection over, steam is got up again, and we sail up the river to our wharf, say the American Line one, which lies nearest to the Brooklyn Bridge. Here, you and I, being in the steerage, if we have our citizenship or naturalisation papers with us, present them to the proper officer, and are then allowed on shore with the saloon and second cabin passengers. If we are without such passport, we have a long and dreary wait on the exposed wharf before we are taken with our belongings

on board the emigrant barge, a two-storied affair, inside of which the crowd is penned off into sections in roped enclosures arranged alphabetically. 'Thank heaven!' we say to ourselves, 'we have escaped that ordeal, and the far worse one afterwards at the Barge Office,' and we make our way gaily up to Park Row, near the bridge entrance, and enter the bar-room of the International Hotel to have a little refreshment before crossing the bridge. And see! it is on the stroke of noon, when we can have a free lunch of excellent tomato soup, with bread and meat and a vegetable or two—a 'square meal,' in fact—all included in our glass of lager beer, for which we pay five cents or twopence-halfpenny. The free lunch! Blessed, cheering boon, native only to the American soil! When we have thus cheaply and satisfyingly fortified the inner man, and we step into the handsomely-equipped electric car which is presently to spin us rapidly across the great bridge, we begin to ask ourselves in the secret recesses of our hearts, which nation, after all, do we belong to—England or the United States? Ponder it carefully, and the answer comes in a still small voice—'To both,' for both are really but one, in essence and tendency—the obverse and reverse sides of the same medal.

TO TIME.

Off! abhorred Iconoclast!

Ruthless hands withhold;

Fling not from their pedestals

All our gods of gold:

Friendship, failing of fruition;

Love, with sweet eyes blind;

Beauty, with a glance misleading;

Pleasure, cypress-twined;

With thy visage saturnine

Mock not our dismay,

As they fall to earth, revealing

Piteous feet of clay.

For we loved them, fell Destroyer,

Loved those idols frail,

Though they lie there now, unsmiling,

Passionless, and pale.

And their memories alluring

Haunt life's after-hours,

As the winds of autumn murmur

Dirges for dead flowers.

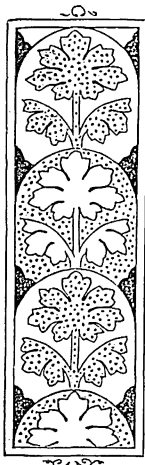
And though, Time, thy Vandal fingers

Break them one by one,

We shall find our lost ideals

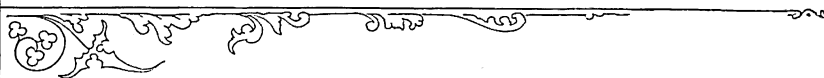
When *thy* sands are run.

LOUISA ADDEY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



A QUIET HAVEN.

BY AN ENGLISHMAN IN SCOTLAND.



OUR writing-table is, if you please, upon the balcony of the Ellangowan Hotel, Creetown. You may not, perhaps, guess off-hand the precise locality of Creetown. But when we say that it is in the heart of 'Guy Mannering Land,' and is surrounded by the country of *The Raiders*; that before us are the bright waters of Wigtown Bay, and behind the purple hills of Kirkcudbrightshire; and that that slowly-moving wreath of white vapour curling in the west, which seems but the whiff from a cigarette, marks the express train that is speeding on its way to Stranraer—the port commanding the shortest sea-passage to Ireland—you will be better able to identify this 'loophole of retreat,' which has not yet 'seen the stir of the Great Babel, nor felt the crowd.'

Creetown is distinguished for its many admirable negative qualities. As a watering-place, it is desirable not so much for what it has as for what it has not. It addresses itself especially to the lover of the sea, the mountain, the heathery moorlands, and the wooded glen; to the brain-worker in quest of quiet, the invalid in search of health, to the recluse who loves seclusion. Even the soft rain and the mist of this country seem idealised and full of artistic attributes, and we feel the force of Sir John Millais's contention that three hours of sunshine in Scotland is worth three months' sunshine in Cairo, and of his description of Caledonia as 'a wet pebble with the colours brought out by the rain.'

Here arbitrary Fashion does not stipulate that you shall dress three times a day and promenade to the melodies of Schumann and Schubert. Here Pleasure is not of a treadmill character, monotonously directed by a despotic master of the ceremonies. Nothing here is stereotyped or sophisticated: no regulation promenading up and down an iron pier; no conventional appointments at the proper times at a spa; no concerts, dances, bazaars, 'functions,' formalities. There is

no straining after effect, no desire to be something different from what you really are. Here are no Ethiopian serenaders whose barefacedness is not hidden by their burnt-cork complexions. There are no raucous street-singers; no hot-gospel preachers; no phrenologists to tell you how to make the fortune they somehow have not managed to amass; no venders of warm ice-cream; no hawkers of 'native' oysters that are 'settlers'; no brazen performers upon brazen instruments; no torturers of trombones and vivisectionists of the violin; no drummers intent upon getting out of the vellum a louder note of discord than its construction entitles it to emit; no pianos with banjo twangs that turn the blessed sense of hearing into a curse and make you envy the deaf; no itinerant sopranos whose top notes set even one's false teeth on edge; no Italian organ-grinders to accost you at your open window, to throw their filthy kisses at your daughters, and push their pendiculous caps under your very nose.

There is absolutely nothing here of those elements that at certain popular seaside resorts make the foreshore and esplanade a vulgar pleasure-fair or a marine edition of the 'wakes.' There are no touting charioteers who are anxious to drive you out of your mind for eighteenpence; no jetty where crowds congregate to witness the arrival of 'the husband's boat' and receive with raillery and derisive remarks the sickly *voyageurs* who, 'when the breezes blow, generally go below, and seek the seclusion that the cabin grants.' There are no excursionists enjoying 'ten hours at the seaside for half-a-crown'—salt breezes retailed at the rate of threepence per hour. In a word, Creetown has not yet paid the inevitable penalty for its beauties by becoming 'popular.' The only apprehension we feel is that when the place becomes better known it will suffer from the 'receipt of custom.' *Di, prohibete nefas!*

But it must not be supposed for one moment

that Creetown is without positive advantages to set off against these negative qualities. The law of association—that *lex non scripta* of sentiment—links the district with the romance of history; and scenes beautiful indeed in themselves become more lovely when illuminated by poetry and legend. To-day we enjoyed a sail with the most kippere-faced of skippers to Dirk Hatteraick's Cave, where he and other daring smugglers in the good-bad old times pursued what they euphemistically called the 'fair trade.' They landed with impunity contraband cargoes of cognac and schnapps, Mechlin lace, and hyson and souchong from the Isle of Man, with the connivance of the local magistrates, who frequently discountenanced (through timidity or worse motives) the officers of the revenue in the exercise of their duty. Yesterday we drove in the Ellangowan four-in-hand coach to Newton-Stewart, seated by the side of that fine Highlander, Robert Laing, who could, we verily believe, drive a pair of 'screws' in a manner that would make the spectator think that he was behind real thoroughbreds—something like Dr Blimber's butler, who gave a winy flavour to the table-beer by the superb way in which he poured it out. To-morrow we go by road or rail to Castle Kennedy, *via* Luce Bay, *en route* for Loch Ryan. From Castle Kennedy station the lighthouse on the long, low Mull of Galloway is visible, and Luce Bay, with its sand-dunes, opens with the mountains of the Isle of Man in the gauzy background and the little Sear Rock isolated in mid-sea.

An English army halting here in 1300 found a village called *Creth*. About one hundred years ago Creetown, which was then known as Ferry-Town-of-Cree, contained 104 persons; now the population is about 900. A cotton factory was established here in 1790, a tanyard, and a mill for patent shot-lead. It is said that the first patent shot was made in Creetown. About fifty years ago one writer records that 'a town-hall and lock-up have lately been erected in Creetown, and have been most useful.' We fancy the first in the list the most so. The gardens were then so stocked with fruit-trees that in spring the place looked like an orchard.

Creetown will be spoilt if it ventures beyond its present clean and homely and healthy status and becomes a fashionable watering-place. If it becomes *ton*, it would be every bit as demoralising as one of John Leech's young, fresh, joyous maidens masquerading as a Parisian 'professional beauty.' The Ellangowan Hotel should be 'up-to-date' enough to meet all reasonable requirements of 'progress and civilisation.' We would infinitely prefer to see—as is to be seen to-day in the one long street—bonny, shapely-limbed, barefooted bairns, with the blue of the sea and the sky in their eyes, and the bronze of the hills on their cheeks, than that the thoroughfare should be modernised and usurped by that precocious, languid,

luxurious creature, 'the child of the period.' Don't think that because these careless, romping Creetown children go (on week-days) barefooted they belong to back-slumdom. No supposition could be more remote from the truth. The bare foot in these Scotch villages is by no means an indication of straitened circumstances. And what grace the absence of leather gives to the feet! What a beautiful anatomical structure is the youthful foot, with its arched instep and the absence of cramping tightness! Here be no corns or bunions, or other excrescences calling for the chiropodist's attention. At Creetown we doubt whether a chiropodist has ever been seen; the place is so abnormally healthy that they must have to send to a big town in the rare event of a death to find an undertaker; while as to a doctor, bless you! why, he would go through almost as much suspense as Captain Dreyfus in waiting for patients that wanted his services.

Young Creetown is, perhaps, taught by a descendant of poor, modest, worthy Dominie Sampson himself, who was willing to suffer hunger and thirst in exchange for acquiring Greek, and Latin. Educated thrift has been the keystone of the Scottish character. There was sober truth as well as gay humour in the motto which Sydney Smith proposed for the *Edinburgh Review* when that powerful organ of the higher criticism was launched. It was *Tenui Musam meditamus avena* ('We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal'). And what a grit of national character has come out of groats! In war and commerce, in the pursuits of industry and the paths of exploration, in universities of learning and in fields of foreign travel, Porridge has been omnipotent. It availeth alike in every latitude and longitude. It is your friend and supporter when you are frozen in the Arctic regions or fevered in equatorial Africa, squatting on Australian sheep-runs or running American cattle-ranches, trapping the moose-deer and the wapiti that roam the backwoods of the Great Lone Land, or carrying the flag or following it in far-off lands beyond the sea. Porridge is more powerful than the Pen. It won the battle of Waterloo, and is associated with the conquest of India and the exploration of the world, supporting Marlborough in the Low Countries, rallying Wolfe at Quebec, marching with Wellington in the Peninsula, following Sir Colin Campbell up the heights of Alma, avenging Delhi and Cawnpore with Outram and Havelock, routing Ayoub Khan with Roberts, storming Dargai with Mathias. And in the future it will be the grown-up lads of such little places as Creetown who will fill professors' chairs, wax eloquent at the Bar and inspiring in the pulpit, and lead forlorn hopes against overwhelming odds just as if the task was part of every day's duty.

A pedestal of which Gallovidians are pardonably proud is the Murray Monument. Alexander

Murray, philologist, was born and reared in a rude cottage at Dunkitterick. On the very spot where his memorial stands he watched sheep and studied his books. His father, a poor shepherd, had taught him the alphabet by tracing the letters with the burnt and blackened end of a 'heather birn' (a heather stick) on the flat of a 'peat wecht' (a shaved sheepskin stretched round a hoop, and used for carrying peats from the stack to the kitchen fire). Murray may be said to have had hardly any school education. He was self-taught and self-made. The aspiring youth wrestled until he had thrown them—

Those twin jailers of the daring heart,
Low birth and iron fortune.

He owed nothing to adventitious aid or influence, 'luck' or fortune, whatever. His life-story shows that the brightest career is open to the poorest youth. 'God,' says Shelley, 'has given man arms long enough to reach heaven, if he will only put them forth.' Murray put forth his arms. To epitomise his biography, the hillside shepherd lad became a D.D. and Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh, and the monument that is such a notable landmark in Galloway was erected by his countrymen in 1835. But, after all, Murray's best memorial is the personal legacy he left to the youth of his country—the heritage of a heroic name and the encouragement of a great example.

The pious Samuel Rutherford, afterwards Professor of Divinity, St Mary's College, St Andrews, author of the famous 'Letters,' frequently preached in this parish, when in Anwoth (1627-39), which is within easy reach of Creetown. When it was proposed to make him a professor in St Andrews his parishioners made a strong but unsuccessful attempt to retain his services. A square granite pyramid on Boreland Hill commemorates his residence in Galloway. This parish of Kirkmabreck gave Edinburgh University another professor, Dr Thomas Brown, Professor of Moral Philosophy, who, if not quite so great a prodigy as Alexander Murray, could read when between four and five years of age, and had a memory so tenacious that he could recall twenty or thirty lines of French or Italian after a single reading. He was popular with his students, and his *Lectures* reached a nineteenth edition in 1850. He was very fond of animals, and believed that some of them had a moral sense and immortal souls. Did his countryman William Nicholson, the peddler poet, also share his belief? We know not, but being a good piper who attended country fairs and gatherings, one day he was found playing vigorously to young cattle and colts, and said he was better pleased with

the antics of the animals 'than if the best leddies in the land were figuring before him.' Dr Murray and others so helped Nicholson to subscribers for his first volume of poems that he realised £100 of profit from it. As a poet he reached his high-water mark in 'The Brownie of Blednoch,' which has been quoted and eulogised by Dr John Brown in his 'Black Dwarf's Bones.' Some of William Nicholson's poems still make good local reading, even after a course of Crockett's Scottish novels, or Scott's *Redgauntlet*, or Harper's useful *Rambles in Galloway*.

This country-side also teems with memories of the Covenanters. Its very stones are cemented with their blood. Crowning the hill-top at Wigtown is the Martyrs' Memorial. It is a monument to two sisters, Margaret Wilson and Margaret MacLachlan, who were tied to a stake and drowned by the rising tide in Wigtown Bay for their adherence to the Covenanters' cause in the fierce days of King James, whose religious persecutions were worthy of Philip the Second.

But the *odium theologicum* no longer disturbs Creetown; the 'Raiders' are friendly Sassenachs, who are welcomed across the Border; the Smugglers' Cave is filled with the joyous 'spirits' of tourists and holiday-makers; and cattle-lifting has given place to industrial pursuits that illustrate the dignity of labour, such as the great granite quarries a mile or two from the town. The present writer had a beautiful little cube of this marble-like granite presented to him at the quarries for a paper-weight. But the compliment was, perhaps, an equivocal one. Our enemies might urge that our literary style is heavy enough without being burdened by the weight of chunks of granite!

This quarry deserves a sentence or two to itself. It was first opened in 1831 by the Liverpool Dock Company, who between that date and 1844 employed from 60 to 450 men, according to the demand for material. Its working in 1834 cost £15,000. Powder was at first employed to loosen the stone, as much as 50, 60, or even 70 lb. of powder being used as a blast; but it was found that the young earthquake caused by this charge destroyed some of the finest blocks of granite, and drills and wedges and crowbars were again reverted to for the time.

Creetown as a health-resort is so salubrious that a valetudinarian who, 'given up' by his physicians, came here some years ago to die, took a new and long lease of life. He has built a house at Creetown, and in personal appearance seems to become younger as he grows older. He may be seen on the Ellangowan Nine-Hole Golf Course (which, by the way, was laid out by old Tom Morris) driving balls in a manner worthy of a holder of the Open Championship.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER IV.



WINTER sprang on to the bulwarks, and dragged her up, clasped her in his arms, and jumped overboard. As he did so a wild cry rang in his ears; he struck out with his feet, and then felt himself drawn under water as if by an irresistible power. Down he went lower and lower, but still struggling to rise. It seemed to him that there was a tremendous pressure on his brain; then this lightened, but he was almost losing consciousness when his head suddenly came above water. There were numbers of figures struggling in the water behind him. Miss Aspern was still holding him with a convulsive clasp, and with great difficulty he shifted himself so as to be able to use one arm as well as his feet, and then struck out so as to get away from those struggling around him. Then he looked around for the boat, but the mist hung heavily on the surface of the water. He was not trying to swim now, but only to keep his mouth and that of his companion above water. In a minute or two the shouts and screams ceased. Looking round, he saw a dark object just above the water, and with difficulty making his way to it, found that it was one of the gratings. Putting his weight on one side, he brought the edge below the water, and undoing Miss Aspern's clasp, laid her head upon it; then he sank it still farther, got his handkerchief from his pocket, and tied it round her arm to the grating to prevent her from slipping off; after which he swam round the other side of the grating, and climbed on to it. With the weight it sank level with the water, but he was able to grasp Miss Aspern and drag her on to it. She opened her eyes now.

'Where are we?' she murmured. 'Where is the boat?'

'I have no doubt that the boat is all right,' the lieutenant said briskly; 'we are on a grating, and you are perfectly safe for the present.'

'Do help me to sit up. Why, the water nearly covers this raft we are on.'

'Yes; so long as we both sit still it will just support us and no more. Fortunately, you see the water is quite smooth, and to-morrow morning I have no doubt I shall be able to get hold of some bits of wreckage and lash them to this grating so as to be able to make a decent sort of raft of it.'

'Are you sure that the boat got away, Mr Winter?'

'I have no doubt that it did.'

'Then why does it not come and pick us up?'

'It had as many on board as it could hold, and

the only thing for them to do was to row away. They know where the land lies, and will be half-way there by now. It was not more than ten or fifteen miles away.'

'Then I suppose they will get help and send out boats to find us?'

'No doubt they will,' the lieutenant said, though he knew that the chance of their obtaining any help at Anticosti was slight indeed.

'Then there is nothing whatever to do?' the girl said after a pause.

'Nothing at all. I might get over and push this grating along a little, and I will certainly do so in the morning if there is nothing in sight; but at present the stars are all hidden by the mist, and I have no idea which way to go; and in the next place, we are at present close to any wreckage that may be floating about, and it is important to get some more if we can, so as to make this grating more buoyant in case of the wind getting up at all.'

'Do you think that many of the boats got away?'

'I should hope two or three of those forward may have done so. I should think that the only quarterdeck boat that got away was the one that your mother was in.'

'You saved her life as well as mine, Mr Winter.'

'Well,' he said lightly, 'we don't know yet who are saved and who are not, so we will wait until we are all safe. Are you very cold, Miss Aspern?'

'I am very wet and uncomfortable, but not very cold. What time will it begin to get light?'

'It will begin to lighten between three and four; it must be past twelve by this time, so there will be only three hours of it.'

'Well, you must talk. Talk about anything, but do talk, or I shall think that this is a sort of nightmare; only don't talk about the ship, please. Tell me where you have been before, or about your people at home.' There was a shake in her voice telling him that the tears were very near.

'I will talk,' he said; 'but first of all let us try and make you a little more comfortable. Let me take off that cloak and wring it out; then you might try to wring out your own things a little, so as to give them a chance of drying a bit as soon as the sun comes out. That is right. Now, if you don't mind leaning against me a bit you might be able to drop off to sleep while I am talking. There, that is better; I am sure you must be more comfortable now.'

Then he began to talk about his boyhood in

the quiet cathedral town in which his father was a minor canon; he talked of his brothers and sisters, and how he, the eldest, had been nominated as a cadet on board the *Britannia*. He told her stories of boyish pranks on board the training ship, and of his delight when, having passed, he was appointed to a ship on the China station. He had got to this point when he broke off. 'There, Miss Aspern, the day is breaking. I am glad to say the mist is clearing off already; now we must look about and see if we can pick up a spar or two, or something to make our raft a rather more solid affair. We should be much more comfortable if we could stand up and move about a little. You see we are almost sitting in the water here; it did not matter as long as there was no chance of drying at all; but as soon as the sun gets up you must make an effort to get your things dry.'

'Shall we see the land?' she asked.

'No, we are too low in the water; but the position of the sun will show us where the land lies, and I shall set to work to try and get to shore in case we should not be picked up by one of the boats.' In the distance he saw some objects floating just above the line of the water, but they were too far off for him to attempt to swim for them. 'There is nothing to be seen that will help us much, Miss Aspern, so I shall take to the water.'

'I would much rather you stopped here,' she said nervously.

'I shall be close by, within six feet. I will take off my coat and waistcoat and shoes, and you must get to one side of the grating while I get to the other; then, when I slip off, I will hold it until you get to the middle again. You had better spread out your shawl to dry, and if you can manage to slip off some of your petticoats all the better; they will never dry all in a lump round you.'

Miss Aspern obeyed his instructions quietly, and in two or three minutes he was swimming and pushing the grating before him northwards.

'There is something floating in the water ahead,' she said presently. 'I think it is an oar.'

'Give me instructions which way to push,' he said. 'The oar will be very useful. I can scull her along with that when I get tired of swimming, and it will do to make a signal with if anything comes in sight.'

He swam for two hours, and then climbed on to the raft again, fastened his handkerchief through the grating and over the oar, and with it began to scull the raft along.

'It is very unsociable your sitting there with your back to me, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern, who had now recovered her spirits, said, with a laugh; 'we are going a great deal faster now than when you were swimming.'

'Yes, I think we are. I did not expect to make

such good way with it; when I get a little more practice it will go faster still.'

As the sun rose and gained in power their clothes dried. 'I wish we had your torpedo-boat here for an hour,' she said.

'I wish we had, Miss Aspern. Still, slow and sure does it. I don't know much about the tides and currents here; but I do think that if there is nothing to throw us back we shan't be far from shore by nightfall. I think we are going through the water a knot and a half an hour; and as we have another twelve hours of daylight, we should certainly be close to land by that time.'

By noon Miss Aspern announced that she could see the land stretching away ahead; and then, looking back astern of them, she exclaimed, 'There is a black spot behind us. I am pretty sure it is a boat.'

'If you will sit down I shall stand up and have a look. Yes, it is a boat, sure enough, end on to us. I think it must be rowing in this direction. I expect they have been out to see if they could pick up any survivors where the ship went down, and are now rowing back to shore. I will fasten your shawl to the oar as a signal.'

In another ten minutes it was certain that the boat was pulling towards land, and that it would pass within half a mile of them.

'How far is she off now, Mr Winter?'

'About four miles, I should say.'

They were now close together on the middle of the raft, and sat down, as the grating was very unsteady when they stood up. The girl sat for some time in silence, her fingers playing nervously with her watch-chain. The young officer was no less nervous, though he did not show it. Again he wished, as he had done a score of times before, that his companion had been a penniless girl, when he would have known what to have said. As it was, he felt that his lips were sealed. If ever he were able to speak, it would certainly not be now. It would be ungenerous and ungentelemanly in the extreme to take advantage of the service he had rendered her.

'Well,' she said suddenly, 'what are we to say to mamma?'

'She will be so pleased to see you alive and well, Miss Aspern, that there won't be much to say.'

'Except that you saved my life, as you saved hers.'

'I shall always be happy in the thought that I was able to do so, Miss Aspern,' he said quietly.

'You are horrid,' she burst out. 'I call you downright mean. Do you want me to say anything else?'

He could not pretend to misunderstand her. 'It would not be fair or right to ask you to say anything else,' he said.

'Do you mean because of money?' she flashed out. 'What would it be to me now if it hadn't

been for you? Only tell me this: if you were rich now, and I were a penniless girl, would you have anything to say?'

'I don't think I should say it now, Miss Aspern. I hope I shouldn't. I should not like to have given me for gratitude what I should want given me for love.'

'You are very unfair,' she cried again; 'but I can't help it. If you won't ask me I must tell you I love you. I love you with all my heart—there!'

After that there was no occasion for further talk, till he said at last, 'I must put up the signal, or the boat will be passing us.'

A quarter of an hour later they were on board the boat, which was manned by the boatswain and four of the crew of the torpedo-boat. They had started immediately after reaching shore with the passengers, and had been rowing about for hours near the spot where they believed the ship had sunk. They had found floating objects, but no survivors, and having given up the search as hopeless, were returning to land when they made out the raft, and had just turned the boat's head in that direction when the signal was hoisted. Two hours later they were ashore. Fortunately, the spot where the boat landed was not far from the lighthouse, where the survivors from the steamer, fifty-two

souls out of three hundred and twenty, had already made their way.

'I am very glad to hear what Clemence has told me,' Mrs Aspern said when she came out of the lighthouse and joined Lieutenant Winter. 'Of course she would do as she liked; but I am so glad she has chosen some one that I shall like too. She has told me what you did for her, and you saved my life as well. Her father will be as glad as I am when I tell him all about it.'

Three days later a steamer was seen coming along the coast; the boat went out to cut her off, and before sunset the whole of the survivors of the *Manitoba* were on board, and some days afterwards were landed at Quebec. A telegram was despatched to Cincinnati, and Mr Aspern met the party at New York, where Lieutenant Winter had no reason to be dissatisfied with the hearty greeting of Mr Aspern after he had heard from his wife and daughter the events of the wreck. He returned in the first steamer to England, and stood his court-martial for the wreck of the torpedo-boat. He was honourably acquitted, and then sent in his application to be put on half-pay. After spending a few days with his family he again crossed the Atlantic, and now lives with his wife in a mansion on Madison Avenue, having a large sailing-yacht on the Sound, and a fast launch on the Hudson River, which has been christened *Torpedo-boat 240*.

MOSQUITOES AND THE SPREAD OF DISEASE.

BY A SOUTH AMERICAN SETTLER.



SYDNEY SMITH scarcely exaggerated when he described the plague of insects which is one of the great drawbacks of the tropics. Of all the insect pests which make life a burden in tropical countries, the first place must surely be given to the mosquito. It is true he is not confined to the torrid zone, although it is there that he is most plentiful and most troublesome. He is found in all latitudes, even within the arctic circle, for we are informed that in frozen Klondyke he is so ubiquitous during the short summer months that life in some parts is almost unendurable, and even animals are driven to the water to avoid his attacks.

The British Isles enjoy a happy immunity from mosquitoes, although they appeared in one district of London this summer, and they are to be found in the same latitudes east and west. This is perhaps to be attributed to the comparative coolness of our summers, and also to the fresh breezes which sweep across the islands from the Atlantic; for coolness and wind are alike unfavourable to the mosquito. There is, however, a gnat common in Britain which so closely resembles the mosquito as to be almost indistinguishable; there are, indeed, some who claim that he is no other than the true mosquito bereft

of his stinging powers owing to climatic conditions. We have several times seen newspaper paragraphs to the effect that the mosquito had been observed in some part of Britain; it was probably the gnat in question which had been taken for it.

The writer has made the acquaintance of mosquitoes in many parts of the world: in the swamps of Florida, the New Zealand bush, and in their native forests of tropical America; and though there are several varieties, they do not differ greatly in size, shape, or disposition. In New Zealand, it may be observed, as in many other islands of the Pacific, the mosquito was quite unknown prior to the advent of Europeans, and was doubtless introduced as an unwelcome passenger in some passing vessel; for, although the insects are rarely seen in the cabins or saloons of vessels (which are always well ventilated in warm weather), in the close atmosphere of the ship's hold they are frequently to be found in swarms.

We well remember one or two dreadful nights passed in the interior of South America, when we happened to have no mosquito-net with us. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that there were more mosquitoes than air, for it was impossible to open one's mouth without capturing a few. Sleep was out of the question; and the hours of

torture seemed as if they would never end, until daylight brought welcome relief.

It is seldom, however, that mosquitoes are so plentiful as this. It is frequently possible to sleep in comfort, even within the tropics, without a mosquito-curtain; but where the insects are numerous these nets—made of muslin, or of a specially prepared fabric—are indispensable. On retiring in the evening any mosquitoes that may be inside are ejected, then the edges of the net are tucked under the mattress, and the remainder of the night can be passed in peace.

New arrivals in the tropics are most liable to the attacks of mosquitoes. It is said to be because their blood is thicker than that of an acclimatised individual; but it more probably is because, in course of time, the system becomes hardened or inoculated with the virus, and the bites of the insects are not felt to the same extent. In the daytime mosquitoes are seldom troublesome; but on the approach of the short tropical twilight they become active, and the ominous humming which betrays their presence soon makes itself heard. If a single mosquito is in the bedroom he will inevitably make the acquaintance of the sleeper before the night is far advanced. He seldom attacks his victim at once, but continues to circle round him, piping shrilly all the while; and there is no sound in nature more irritating than the piping of a mosquito. If the sufferer imagines for a moment that his tormentor has left him, he soon finds out his mistake, as with a vicious whoop he whizzes past his ears. He will continue to manoeuvre in this fashion for several minutes, or it may be even half-an-hour; but the victim knows by experience that he will not leave till he has had his blood. At last he feels the sharp sting which informs him that the mosquito has applied the combined lancet and pump which he carries in his proboscis, and he gives himself a vicious slap in the face (the mosquito's favourite point of attack) in the vain hope of killing his tormentor. But the mosquito is far too nimble to be caught so easily, and only retreats for a moment, to renew the attack with increased vigour.

The sting of a mosquito is almost as sharp and painful as that of a bee; and it is also said that, like the female (or working) bee, it is only the female mosquito which stings.

Human blood is only a luxury, and not a necessity to the mosquito, for he is found in many places where the presence of man, or other large animals, is a rarity. His main article of diet appears to be vegetable juices or decaying vegetable matter; for if such be left in a suitable spot (such as the bottom of a barrel), it will be found to attract a large number of mosquitoes. They are specially fond of moist brown sugar or treacle.

The main requisites for the comfort of the mosquito are heat, moisture, shade, and a calm atmosphere. Where these conditions are united he will be found in abundance. He cannot

endure the slightest breeze, and in rooms which are well ventilated, and in which the air circulates freely in every corner, the insects are seldom numerous; while, on the contrary, in close, stuffy rooms they are generally plentiful.

One of the charges laid to the mosquito is that he acts as a medium for conveying infectious diseases from one person to another, as the result of his blood-sucking habits. It is said that yellow-fever can be easily spread in this way; if so, it might easily explain the ravages caused by the disease in tropical countries. No less an authority than Professor Koch, the eminent German bacteriologist, has stated it as a confirmed fact that the mosquito is instrumental in conveying the infection of malaria. This disease is known to be caused by a parasitic protozoon which inhabits the red corpuscles of the blood, and mosquitoes are said to be the most fertile source of contagion. There would seem, therefore, to be some truth in the saying, common in tropical countries, 'No mosquitoes, no ague.' In an article in *Knowledge* (March 1, 1899) Mr P. H. Grimshaw gives some account of the researches of Professors Grassi and Bignami into the question of the spread of disease by means of mosquitoes. Grassi found three species of gnat or true mosquito which must be regarded with suspicion. *Culex pipiens*, which is half-an-inch long, and which announces its presence by a peculiar piping sound, he acquits as harmless. *Anopheles claviger* Grassi calls the 'spy' of malaria, and he confirms its connection with its spread in Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Roman Campagna. *Culex pencillaris* and *Culex malariae* he regards with more than suspicion. It appears, however, that in order to produce fever in a healthy person by the bite of the mosquito the insect must previously have bitten some one who has been stricken with illness. Professor Grassi believes, however, that mosquitoes are probably the only means of spreading the disease.

Not long ago Major Ronald Ross, head of the Malarial Mission, which left Liverpool on 29th July, sent home this cablegram from Sierra Leone, West Africa: 'Malarial mosquito found. Ask Government to send at once men.' The theory of Major Ross, which is similar to that of Professor Grassi, is that malaria is disseminated by a particular kind of mosquito, which frequents malarial swamps and, laden with poisonous germs, injects them into the human body with the sting. Before leaving Liverpool, Major Ross explained that the efforts of the expedition, which was sent out by the Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases, would be mainly directed to find the mosquito in question. Mr Jones, one of the organisers of the Liverpool Tropical School, who received the cablegram, at once apprised Mr Chamberlain of the discovery. A representative medical man was afterwards sent to assist in the further prosecution of the researches.

The South American Indians utilise the services

of the mosquito. One of their favourite articles of food is the armadillo, a species of large tortoise. This animal, as its name indicates, is covered with a thick coat of armour; but, like Achilles of old, it has certain vulnerable points, as the mosquito knows by experience, for he enters his burrow to pursue his parasitic calling. When hunting for armadillos the Indian thrusts a stick into the animal's burrow, and if a cloud of mosquitoes emerge he knows that the animal is at home, and proceeds to dig him out. On the other hand, if few or no mosquitoes are found in the hole the Indian knows it is a waste of time to wait any longer, and proceeds to investigate the next burrow.

We have heard of the mosquito being utilised in another way. A West Indian planter who was much troubled with unwelcome visitors hit on the following mode of getting rid of them. His house was much infested with the insects, and every bed was fitted with a mosquito-curtain. In one of the rooms was a netting such as is frequently sold by outfitters in England to the unsophisticated traveller, in which the meshes are too large to prevent the ingress of mosquitoes,

which pass freely in and out, like sprats through the meshes of a fisherman's net. This room was reserved for the use of troublesome guests, whose stay was in consequence generally short and their departure abrupt.

We ourselves remember one instance in which the mosquito befriended us—involuntarily, of course. When living in a tropical part of South America we were in the habit of receiving a bundle of newspapers by every mail from England. The papers were frequently delayed in transit; we discovered the cause one day when, on opening a magazine, a dead mosquito was found flattened between the leaves. It clearly could not have got there before the magazine left England; it was evident, therefore, that somebody was in the habit of opening and reading our mail matter *en route*. This little incident helped us to trace the culprit, and to receive our papers more promptly in future.

There is, we believe, no effectual remedy for mosquitoes. It is said that they have a dislike to the smell of eucalyptus, and that a few of those trees planted round a house will keep them away; but we have never had an opportunity of testing this remedy.

YAGAN, 'THE AUSTRALIAN WALLACE.'



HE early colonists of Western Australia had met with a peaceful reception from the aborigines of the Swan River Settlement. Their intrusion was, in fact, regarded by the swarthy blacks with supreme indifference. Some, from primitive curiosity, approached and examined with relish the raiment and vestures of civilisation; while others fled from the white man's presence, declaring, in their jabbering dialect, that the invaders were their forefathers come to life again. This superstitious dread was sufficient to keep the tribe at a safe distance in the bush.

The settlers had endeavoured to show every kindness to the aborigines, on the score of diplomacy as well as humanity. Trinkets and various ornaments, food and multi-coloured apparel, were meted out liberally to the tribe, to conciliate their good wishes and preserve them in their inoffensive attitude.

But the reign of general amity was soon to be broken; and the cause, pitiable to relate, must be laid at the door of the pioneers of civilisation. A few nefarious deeds by contemptible settlers kindled the fire of sedition in the settlement, and provoked the wrath and just resentment of the innocent aborigines.

One day a labourer, who had recently migrated to this quarter from Tasmania, was proceeding through the bush with a friend of a cog-nate disposition, when some natives were spied in

the distance. A few yards from the *wurly* (native tent) a black woman was innocently playing with her little child, to the great amusement of the camp. 'Confound those black trash!' he said. 'I'll show you how we treat them in Van Diemen's Land.' With this he levelled his gun at the harmless woman and shot her dead. The terrified natives fled with pitiful yells from the scene of the murder. This foul and impious deed was not destined, however, to remain unpunished. Though the act was condemned by the community as a cold-blooded murder, they never expected retaliation, or that vengeance would recoil on their heads. The murderer was, however, to receive justice from the outraged blacks.

During those years of hostile encroachment on aboriginal territory there was one man whose spirit burned with ire at the injustice of the men who were robbing his people of their lands and lawful possessions. Yagan, the chief of the Koombana tribe, was a man of Herculean stature, of enormous physical strength and courage, and chivalrous and daring to a degree that excited the affection and dread of every homestead. His followers feared and worshipped him. In the hunt, in love, and in war this valiant chief had no rival. He was proud of his native home, and, with the patriotism of a Wallace, was ready to spill his last drop of blood in her defence.

Yagan had suffered the settlers to till and develop their lands in peace. Where kindness

was shown he had returned it liberally, and many a colonist was indebted to him for his good services to them in distress. To women he was particularly chivalrous, and oftentimes did he carry to their homes dainty fish and the flesh of the kangaroo. His magnanimity was admired; he was extremely sensitive, and the community took every precaution to avoid giving him offence, for when roused to anger his appearance was such as to create alarm for those at whom his wrath was directed.

When the tragic news of the woman's murder was brought to Yagan his anger knew no bounds. Summoning his tribesmen to a conference, he harangued them with the full might of martial eloquence. From that night Yagan was destined to be the relentless foe of the colonists.

Choosing two of his most trustworthily tribesmen, he sallied forth from the camp in search of the delinquent. The Tasmanian's whereabouts had been ascertained, and by taking a wide circuit Yagan could make a descent on him from an unseen point in the rear of the house. The sportive murderer and a hired labourer, John Hope, by name, were busy working in their master's garden; when suddenly the latter raised his head and descried three natives in warlike array within fifty yards from the spot on which they were working. Quickly informing his companion of the suspicious fact, he and his fellow-servant hurriedly deliberated on the best course to be adopted. To get back to their axes they would have to face a row of deadly spears, while the river in front was a great barrier to their flight. The latter alternative had to be adopted, and, throwing down their spades, they made off with all speed to the river, closely pursued by the fleet Yagan. The race of death was hard and short. Reaching a spot where a fallen tree did duty for a bridge, the two fugitives proceeded to rush across the uncertain log. From incessant rain the primitive bridge had become slippery, and when midway across, the Tasmanian slipped and fell into the deep, rushing river. His end had come. A shower of spears from the unerring hand of Yagan settled his frantic struggles in the stream, while Hope was only spared to gain the opposite bank. Vengeance having thus been doubly exacted, the natives quickly retraced their steps into the interminable bush.

The farmer on returning home was full of anxiety about the absence of his servants. When they did not return in the morning his suspicions were aroused, and he commenced a search. To his horror and regret, he found their mangled remains beside the ill-fated log, trans-fixed with numerous spears. The agency that had procured their death was only too obvious, and, with hastened steps, he went to the capital to report the murder. As for Tasmanian Jim, the farmer had always feared that justice would overtake him; but the innocence of his comrade

in death filled him with resentment. The authorities issued orders for the arrest of Yagan, who was suspected on the grounds of a conversation he had had with a settler a few hours before the commission of the audacious act of vengeance. But where was the relentless and retaliatory chief to be found?

A company of red-coated dragoons, under the command of a skilful officer, scoured the surrounding country for Yagan and his confederates; but their mission was difficult and perilous. Midgegooroo, an old man, alone was captured, and conveyed by the soldiers to the commanding officer. Despite his loud lamentations, he was escorted to the jail at Fremantle to be treated as an example for the benefit of those who should deliberately destroy the life and property of settlers. As an arch-accomplice of the rebel Yagan he was ordered to be shot by the dragoons, as a wholesome warning to his tribe. The day on which the sentence was put into execution Yagan was, unknown to the authorities, in the vicinity of the prison, and beheld the grim despatch of his friend. Yagan marked the destroyers well. In his wrath and vexation, he resolved to await alone near the scene of the execution, and fulfil the promise to which he was pledged. Night stole on, yet the hungry chief forsook not his hiding-place. He knew well that his life was in the direst peril; but what mattered that to one so bold in facing death? As the last streaks of twilight were fading into night Yagan crept closer to the prison wall. He heard the gay laugh of the soldiers as they descended the narrow path leading to the village. Two soldiers in uniform passed within a dozen yards of the spot where Yagan lay. Gently raising his head to scan their countenances, he saw one of the slayers of his friend. Allowing them to walk a few yards in advance, he jumped to his feet, poised his spear, and hurled it at his victim. A terrific and death-sounding shout rent the air, and a comrade beheld his brother-soldier fall to the earth pierced through the heart by a spear. Quickly recovering his senses, after the startlingly sudden assault, he levelled his rifle at the quarter from where the deadly weapon must have issued; but no human being was visible. Yagan, with his remarkable fleetness of limb, had once more dived into the bush, and was soon safe from all pursuit.

While an expedition was busy scanning every nook and corner of the forest in search of him, leagues away from the capital, Yagan, with unparalleled audacity, entered a settler's house in Perth and demanded food. On obtaining his request he politely thanked the inmates, and told them that he would bring them fish in return for their kindness. The family recognised Yagan, but were too much afraid of his vengeance to betray his visit to the constabulary.

Many other colonists knew of the outlaw's whereabouts, but they were loath to betray a stranger to law and civilised order. They had found him exceedingly courteous, gentle, and generous in all his dealings with them, and they admired his straightforward character and his unfailing magnanimity. Yet they feared his wrath and vengeance; and, while they would willingly have had him secured, they hesitated to convert their desires into responsible action. There was something in the daring of the guileless warrior-chief that defied the ignominious thought of treachery.

Despite Yagan's successful endeavours to elude straightforward search, he was, nevertheless, led into a very clever trap. Five occupants of a boat were engaged fishing on the river, and Yagan, with one of his known accomplices, was indulging in the same pastime on the bank. Friendly conversation passed between the shore and the boat, and the two natives were induced to come on board and enjoy the luxury of a cruise. Unsuspicious of any ulterior intent, the natives accepted the invitation gladly, and on the boat coming alongside they sprang on board with great glee. The boat was immediately rowed out to midstream; and while the attention of the natives was forcibly drawn to a large fish near the surface, agile hands quickly seized and bound them fast with ropes. Had the chance been less favourable and their motions less smart it is possible that Yagan would have given them a splendid opportunity for swimming exercise. The victors were aware of the magnitude of their achievement, and with no little self-satisfaction they disembarked their pinioned prisoners and marched them to the capital.

The news of the capture quickly spread, and the citizens felt not a little relieved. The captives were lodged in Fremantle prison under double lock and key and an additional array of warders.

There was a division of opinion among the Government authorities as to the sentence that should be imposed on the law-breakers. By their former edict they had outlawed Yagan and granted liberty to any one to shoot him; but since that promulgation they had, after further inquiry, changed their views about the nature of his punishment. It was decided, on the score of his many excellent qualities, to spare his life, and subject him to a term of close imprisonment on Carnac Island. A Crown official, who had evinced unusual interest in Yagan's case, undertook to accompany the prisoners to their destination, and teach them the new lessons of morality and civilisation. His offer was accepted, and on the following day the prisoners, accompanied by their ethical tutor and two fully-armed warders, were rowed across to the barren, desolate shore of Carnac.

Weeks flew by, and the zealous reformer kept

unflinchingly to his self-imposed task of educating the savages. From time to time he despatched favourable reports to the Government on the moral and mental improvement of his students. He had taught them useful arts, and a commendable specimen of the carpenter's handiwork in the form of a well-built bungalow for the reformer proved in some measure the success of his tuition. Each day he marked with satisfaction an improvement in their mental organisation, and he prophesied that within a year he would have them transformed into respectable members of society. After repeated questioning, moreover, he was convinced that they were happier under their new régime, and had no further wish to return to their primitive life and customs.

One day, however, a boat had been accidentally left on the beach, and afforded a splendid opportunity to the natives for carrying out a purpose they had long agreed upon. It was a sultry afternoon, and the reformer had betaken himself to his couch for a siesta. The warders, who were continually grumbling at their monotonous surroundings, had strayed to a distant part of the island to catch sharks. This favourite amusement helped to 'fill in' the day for the discontented guardians. Everything was at hand, with the exception of the rowlocks, which were usually kept in the dining-room of the bungalow; Yagan crept into the room where the reformer slept, and cautiously removed them from the cupboard. With all haste the two fugitives pushed off the boat, and before it was known that they had gone the prisoners were well across the channel.

The voyage across did not attract the notice of the Fremantle authorities, though it was made within full view of the prison. Yagan steered his course for a point at a considerable distance from the port, where he knew there would be none present to prevent his retreat into the woods. On gaining the shore the natives pulled up their craft, and, after a hurried survey of the neighbourhood, darted forth at a quick pace into the friendly bush. Free once more, with nimble steps they made for their old haunts on the Swan River.

The following day a fishing-boat was attracted to Carnac by repeated signalling of sheets and firing of guns. The occupants, surmising that something was amiss, responded to the summons and rowed to the jetty. Here they received the first intimation of Yagan's escape. The three solitary inhabitants of the island, who had no boat left to enable them to proceed to the mainland and report, then embarked, and were ferried across to Fremantle with all speed. The superintendent of Yagan's incarceration related the unfortunate tidings to the governor of the jail, and laid marked emphasis on the warders' absence and their guilt. Information was immediately carried to the constabulary, and the search was renewed. Like former expeditions, it was doomed

to inevitable failure. The area was too wide and the forest too dense with scrub and undergrowth to permit of systematic and successful search. While the hunters were busy tracking secret paths in the interior, the game was in the village from which they had set out.

When all hope of laying hands on Yagan was beginning to vanish from men's minds, the Attorney-General of that time was surprised by a visit from the chief, who was on this occasion attended by two of his most powerful followers. It was truly an unpleasant situation for the representative of law. The Crown official, who was more than any one concerned with Yagan's rebellious conduct, and whose duty it was to apprehend the fugitive, was enjoying a few hours of relaxation in his garden. The natives had approached so silently that he was unaware of their presence till Yagan touched him lightly on the shoulder as he was bending to plant his vegetables. Apprised thus, he turned suddenly round to find himself confronted with blackskins and a deadly array of spears. A tumultuous conflict of ideas passed through the lawyer's mind as he stood surveying his uninvited guests. Yagan looked sullen and gloomy, and his face betrayed hostile designs. As if in constant anticipation of treachery, his spear, of exquisite finish and exceedingly sharp-pointed, was poised. Well did the lawyer appreciate the danger that threatened his life, for the part he had taken in his capacity as the prosecutor for the Crown in bringing about Midgegooroo's death was known to the chief. Helpless in their hands, he apathetically, though stoically, resigned himself to whatever fate the outcome of this meeting should bring about.

Yagan's reassuring manner set the lawyer's fears at rest. Approaching the learned official, Yagan laid one hand gently and familiarly on his shoulder, while with the other he gesticulated, to give emphasis to his speech. Strong and fervid patriotism burned beneath each disjointed syllable of the narrative.

'White man, take black man's home and food; white man hunts him to bush; black man do white man no wrong, yet white man shoots all black man. Why should white man treat us so?'

There was an earnestness and a truth in these simple sentences that carried home conviction to the listener's mind. The colonists were to blame for the retaliation, for it was they who began the murder of the innocent aborigines. Yagan continued his reflections:

'White man shoot black man. Yagan (s)pear two.'

'If Yagan,' replied the lawyer, 'spear white man, all white men will shoot Yagan.'

'Yagan fear no white man. White man shoot; Yagan kill.'

Seeing that it was dangerous to remonstrate

with the barbarous views so forcibly held and expressed by the native chief, the intelligent official thought it wise to leave his arguments and intentions unanswered. To his immense relief, however, Yagan, evidently fearing he had delayed long enough in hostile territory, took leave of his host, and departed with his retinue.

About a month after this latest episode in Yagan's outlawed career, several natives were convicted of having stolen goods from a Fremantle store, and were brought up for sentence. One, more unfortunate than his brother criminals, was accused on a second charge of incendiarism, and sentenced, on his guilt being established, to be shot. It was never known by what means information of this capital sentence was conveyed to Yagan. The Government, too, never dreamt that the rebel would again dare to question its right by reprisal. A cruel deception immediately followed.

The solemn threat of the chief in the lawyer's garden at Guildford was too surely fulfilled: 'White man shoot black man; Yagan (s)pear two.' Though on former occasions the successful avenger had directed vengeance at the guilty culprits, it was not necessary, according to the spirit of their primeval law, to search out the actual agent for adequate punishment. Their conscience was satisfied and their wrath appeased on the spearing of any one of the tribe or race to which the delinquent belonged. On this particular occasion it was impossible for the chief to ascertain who was responsible for his tribesman's death; but special ignorance on this head did not prevent retribution at his hands. Regardless of capture or danger, Yagan hastened with two of his confederates to the confines of Perth. While in secret hiding here, a native messenger who had, for his own edification, witnessed the execution of the native, related to the chief the sad events of his death. The lurid picture fired his ire and stimulated bloody revenge. Next morning, as the citizens of Perth were bestirring themselves, a messenger rode in to the governor at breakneck speed. An unusual spectacle like this aroused their curiosity. Its meaning was soon divulged. Two farm-labourers in the employment of a farmer named Philipps had been speared in their cart as they were returning home to the farm. Seventeen spear-wounds were found on their mangled remains. The following account of the tragic incident and its authorship was given by Philipps himself:

'As our team was making its way towards Dargeeling I was surprised by a speedy visit from Yagan and two of his followers, who darted from out the bush, and confronted me in a most disagreeably hostile fashion. The outlaw looked uncommonly grave and sullen, and the fierce glare that flitted with amazing rapidity across his eyes gave convincing signs that he was bent on mischief. Many a time have I met the gallant and courteous native, but never under so

inauspicious circumstances. His old cordiality had somehow frozen into icy coldness, and his greetings were short, severe, and abrupt.

"Yagan," I remarked, "you look extremely fierce and unfriendly," at the same time pointing to his agitated features. To this remark he made no reply, but, coming nearer me, asked in a nervous undertone where the men were. "They're some way behind; but what do you want with them? Come up with me to the house and get some meat." "Nulla, nulla; tanke" ("No, no; thanks"), he replied; "I want John see." Before I could utter another syllable the three disappeared quickly into the bush. I sat ruminating over this extraordinary meeting, and endeavoured in vain to divine the reason for Yagan's present hostility.

The whole household had lived on the best terms with the brave chief; and no one, as far as he knew, was guilty of any cruelty or unkindness to the blacks. He forgot that John had stolen one of the native women, and had seriously wounded her husband in his successful abduction.

'The more I pondered the more the conclusion was forced upon me that Yagan had sinister designs on their lives, whatever his motive for the assault might be. I stopped my horses and listened. Not a sound could I hear in the awful stillness of the bush. I feared something must be amiss, as their team ought by this time to have come up to where I was. They could not have been more than a mile away from me at the time Yagan presented himself so unceremoniously. My suspicions aroused, I walked briskly back in their direction, and when I had proceeded a few hundred yards I heard sounds of heavy groaning. A gruesome picture loomed up before my vision, and I ran as one demented. Reaching the fatal scene, I nearly fainted on beholding the horrible spectacle. James Neil I came across first, lying stretched on a plot of grass amid a pool of blood. I raised him, spoke to him, entreated him to speak; but, alas! life had fled beyond recall. Deep moaning from the other side of the road flashed the happy intelligence of life. Running to the aid of the wounded man, I found him writhing in the greatest agony; but my efforts were unavailing. He expired in my arms with the name of Yagan on his lips. Dazed, furious, and sad, I sat down, and for several moments was lost in bitter thought. Nothing that I could do could restore their precious lives. With tender care, and amid the solemn hush of the eternal forest, I laid the two bodies side by side and spread over them the cart rug. With eyes bedimmed, I departed to gain assistance; and within a few hours the remains were removed. I kept wondering why Yagan had selected them for his victims and spared me, who was alone and unprotected.'

A perfect storm of indignation swept the little

capital on the receipt of the news of the double tragedy. Settlers met in small groups and discussed the grievous incident. Their wrath at this diabolical outrage was inexpressible. Yagan could no longer expect mercy. The Government was in a state of great anxiety, and offered a sum of five hundred pounds for Yagan's head, dead or alive. It was now determined to get rid of this pest at whatever cost. There could be no security as long as this notorious cut-throat was allowed to go at large. Voluntary expeditions were got up for the capture of the outlaw. Policemen were detached in companies to search the neighbouring woods. But the end of this untamed actor was not to be reached by straightforward means. It was left for the old application of treachery to realise this desirable goal. His death was compassed by a method that was soon after to be condemned as unworthy of civilisation.

Two boys named James and John Lewis, of whom Yagan was extremely fond, tempted by the reward of five hundred pounds offered by the Government to any one who would shoot him, invited the native chief to dinner one day on the outskirts of their farm. They were prevented from accomplishing their treacherous act the first day. Yagan enjoyed himself with the boys, and as they rose to go invited them to come to a repast in his camp on the day following. During the meal given them by the chief, as Yagan rose to refill James's plate, John, the younger lad, levelled his gun and shot the chief through the head. The warrior-chief fell dead.

When the boys saw the result of their terrible crime they fled in great terror and dismay. But vengeance quickly dogged their steps. A few of Yagan's followers, who never went far from their beloved chief's side, heard the report of the gun, and at once ran towards the camp. There they found their noble master stretched in the cold clasp of death. With fiendish yells they pursued the guilty youths, and came up with the younger at the bank of the river. A volley of spears whistled through the air, and when James looked behind he beheld several natives driving their spears through his brother's body. No share in the spoil would the unfortunate and misguided youth now claim; his reward for cold-blooded treachery was other than his sanguine hopes had expected. The surviving brother reached the farm in safety, and reported the death of Yagan and his brother. The reward was paid the following week; but pressure was brought to bear on him, and he left the colony forthwith. The whole community was horrified at the unparalleled treachery and deceit of the boys; and instead of praise their action elicited strong condemnation from the local press. Thus ended the life of a patriot so honest and generous that he had not even withheld a share of his scanty repast from the hand that slew him.

A MODERN STAGE-COACH.



THE coaching days are done. The railway has killed them. Where now the romance of a journey, with the risk of being 'held up' by the way? Gone for ever. Yet there are still a few coach-drives in different parts of the country, perhaps as much for the novelty of the idea as anything else.

Such an one, taking the better part of a day, is the interesting drive from London to Brighton; and, on a smaller scale, that from Birmingham to Coventry. It was our good fortune recently to enjoy the latter drive; not that we were unable to go to Coventry by rail. Not at all. We could easily have done that, there being a very convenient train-service; but we were desirous of precipitating ourselves, if we could, into the stage-coach days, forgetting for the moment that we were staying at the *Station Hotel*, and that there was such a thing as the mighty locomotive carrying its train of carriages at the rate of sixty miles an hour. So to the *Grand Hotel* we hied, to get a coach-ticket, a quarter of an hour before the start. 'Was there a vacant place?' we humbly asked, thinking, in our innocence, that all seats might possibly be taken up. 'There are not any taken yet, sir.' 'Oh!' we answer. 'We believe in plenty of room, but something less than the whole coach will suit us.' As it happened—and a very exceptional thing, we understand—we were the only passenger; and, punctually at a quarter past eleven, with crack of whip and blare of horn, we started on our trip from the door of the 'Grand.'

There is nothing in the 'Grand' to remind you of the old coaching days; a most modern up-to-date hotel, upholstered in the most luxurious fashion. But even this gives some interest to the drive; for, as you proceed on your journey from this hotel and modern Birmingham to quaint old Coventry and the six-hundred-year-old inn at which you are set down, you seem to be travelling back through the centuries. For the first few miles the route is from the centre to the circumference of the Midland capital. Attention is directed to us by the continual blowing of the horn, and all eyes are turned our way. Whether our guard has read the Scripture, 'Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do,' we know not, but he evidently disregards it. Of course, we sit with stolid countenance, cigar in mouth, as if it were quite an ordinary occurrence being the observed of all observers; and thus we sweep on through the long suburbs, rising gradually from the lower slums to the genteeler terraces, till, on the outskirts of the city, as we come to the villas of the higher middle-class, garden framed, looking pictures

of comfort and moderate luxury, one is put in mind of the suburbs of London, only on a smaller scale—a municipal spider-web, but not quite so large as that of the great Metropolis, yet of a respectable size. The great Scotch romancer is honoured as we pass out of Birmingham by the Waverley Road, containing one of our modern palatial Board schools—this one, we believe, devoted entirely to more advanced pupils—past the picturesque village of Yardley, about five miles from the city, and change horses at the 'Three Horse-Shoes' at Sheldon, six miles on our way.

All old inns are those we pass on the road, which but a few years ago were crumbling to decay; gone are their palmy days when the London coach used to pass—for we are now on the London coach road. The cycle has, however, given these old inns a new lease of life, and every one of them has awakened as from a death-sleep, donned new robes, and decked itself with modern adornments; and now no more inviting hostleries are to be found anywhere.

This road, let us say in passing, is a very paradise for cyclists—long, smooth, straight, without inclines; an inn every couple of miles, where everything can be had. What more is wanted? On high days and holidays the ground is literally covered by the wheel.

Horses changed, on again through a beautiful Warwick country, smiling fields on every side; no hills to interrupt the view, and the eye can range for miles in any direction. On the right of the road we have a splendid game-preserve, and a little farther on a great fox-hunting country. Passing the hamlet of Stonebridge we reach the picturesque village of Meriden, said to be the very centre of England, an old weather-worn cross marking the spot. Here we again change horses for the final stage of our journey, and, passing the village of Allesley, with another final flourish of trumpet we sweep into the ancient city of Coventry, and are plumped down at the 'Craven Arms,' formerly the 'White Bear,' an inn at which the old London coach changed horses. This inn is said to be six hundred years old, and has a romantic history. Many strange sights it has seen that the pen of a Fielding would have revelled in. It was rebuilt at the beginning of the century, although the stables date back to Elizabethan times. 'Mine host' is in evidence, and welcomes his visitors, delighted to give them any information in his power. With sharpened appetite we sit down to luncheon, as visions of Earl Leofric, Countess Godiva, and Peeping Tom pass before our eyes; and in the after-noon these are strangely mingled with bicycles, tricycles, and motor-cars, as if it were not on a horse but a machine that the Countess was obliged to take her unwelcome ride.

THE STORY OF AN ORCHID.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

By FREDERICK BOYLE, Author of *Camp Notes*, &c.

HERE are those who pronounce *Vanda Sanderiana* the stateliest of all orchids. To compare such numberless and varied forms of beauty is rather childish. But it will be allowed that a first view of those enormous flowers, ten or more upon a stalk—lilac above, pale-cinnamon below, covered with a network of crimson lines—is a memorable sensation for the elect.

We may fancy the emotions of Mr Roebelin on seeing it: the earliest of articulate mortals so favoured. His amazement and delight were not alloyed by anticipation, for no rumour of the marvel had gone forth. Roebelin was travelling 'on spec' for once. In 1879 Mr Sander learned that the Philippine Government was about to establish a mail service from Manila to Mindanao. Often had he surveyed that great island longingly, from his arm-chair at St Albans, assured that treasures must await the botanist there. But although the Spaniards had long held settlements upon the coast, and, of course, claimed sovereignty over the whole, there had hitherto been no regular means of communication with a port whence steamers sailed for Europe. A collector would be at the mercy of chance for transmitting his spoil, after spending assuredly a thousand pounds. It was out of the question. But the establishment of a line of steamers to Manila transformed the situation. Forthwith Roebelin was despatched, to find what he could.

He landed, of course, at the capital, Mindanao; and the Spaniards—civil, military, even ecclesiastic—received him cordially. Any visitor was no less than a phenomenon to them. It is a gay and pleasant little town, for these people, having neither means nor opportunity, as a rule, to revisit Europe, make their home in the East. And Roebelin found plenty of good things round the glorious bay of Illana. But he learned with surprise that the Spaniards did not even profess to have authority beyond a narrow strip here and there upon the coast. The interior is occupied by savages, numerous and warlike, Papuan by race, or crossed with the Philippine Malay. Though they are not systematically hostile to white men, Roebelin saw no chance of exploring the country.

Then he heard of a 'red *Phalænopsis*' on the north coast, a legendary wonder, which must have its own chronicle by-and-by. Seduced especially by this report, Roebelin sailed in a native craft to Surigao, a small but very thriving settlement, which ranks next to the capital. People

there were well acquainted with *Phalænopsis*, but they knew nothing of a red one; some of them, however, talked in vague ecstasy of an orchid with flowers as big as a dinner-plate to be found on the banks of Lake Magindanao, a vast sheet of water in the middle of the island. They did not agree about the shape, or colour, or anything else relating to it; but such a plant must be well worth collecting anyhow. It was not dangerous to ascend the river, under due precautions, nor to land at certain points of the lake. Such points are inhabited by the Subano tribe, who live in hourly peril from their neighbours the Bagabos, against whom they beg Spanish protection. Accordingly, white men are received with enthusiasm.

The expedition, therefore, would be comparatively safe, if a guide and interpreter could be found. And here Roebelin was lucky. A small trader who had debts to collect among the Subanos offered his *sampan*, with its crew, on reasonable terms, and proposed to go himself. He was the son of a Chinaman from Singapore, by a native wife, and spoke intelligible English. The crew also had mostly some Chinese blood, and Roebelin gathered that they were partners of Sam Choon, his dragoman, in a very small way. The number of Celestials and half-breeds of that stock in Mindanao had already struck him, in comparison with Manila. Presently he learned the reason. The energetic and tenacious Chinaman is hated by all classes of Spaniards—by the clergy because he will not be converted, by the merchants because he intercepts their trade, by the military because he will not endure unlimited oppression, and by the public at large because he is hard-working, thrifty, and successful. He is dangerous, too, when roused by ill-treatment beyond the common, and his secret societies provide machinery for insurrection at a day's notice. But in Mindanao the Chinaman is indispensable. White traders could not live without his assistance. They do not love him the better, but they protect him so far as they may from the priests and the military.

I have no adventures to tell on the journey upwards. It lasted a good many days. Roebelin secured few plants, for this part is inhabited by Bagabos, or some race of their kindred, and Sam Choon would not land in the forest.

At length they reached Lake Magindanao; the day was fine, and they pushed across. But presently small round clouds began to mount over the blue hills. Thicker and thicker they rose. A pleasant wind swelled the surface of the lake, but those clouds far above moved continually faster. Roe-

belin called attention to them. But the Chinaman is the least weatherwise of mortals. Always intent on his own business or pleasure—the constitution of mind which gives him such immense advantage above all other men in the struggle for existence—he does not notice his surroundings much. Briefly, a tremendous squall caught them in sight of port—one of those sudden outbursts which make fresh-water sailing so perilous in the tropics. The wind swooped down like a hurricane from every quarter at once, as it seemed. For a moment the lake lay still, hissing, beaten down by the blow; then it rose in solid bulk like waves of the ocean. In a very few minutes the squall passed on, but it had swamped the *sampan*. They were so near the land, however, that the Subanos, hastening to the rescue, met them half-way in the surf, escorted them to shore, laughing and hallooing, and returned to dive for the cargo. It was mostly recovered in time.

These people do not build houses in the water, like so many of their kin. They prefer the safety of high trees; it is not by any means so effectual, but such, they would say, was the custom of their ancestors. At this village the houses were perched not less than fifty feet in air, standing on a solid platform. But if the inhabitants are thus secured against attack, on the other hand—each family living by itself up aloft—an enemy on the ground would be free to conduct his operations at leisure. So the unmarried men and a proportion of the warriors occupy a stout building raised only so far above the soil as to keep out reptiles. Here also the chief sits by day, and public business is done. The visitors were taken thither.

When Roebelin had dried his clothes the afternoon was too far advanced for exploration. The crew of the *prau* chattered and disputed at the top of their shrill voices as case after case was brought in, dripping, and examined. But Sam Choon found time in the midst of his anxieties to warn Roebelin against quitting the cleared area. 'Bagabos come just now, they say,' he shouted. But the noise and the fuss and the smell were past bearing. Roebelin took his arms and strolled out till supper was ready.

I do not know what he discovered. On returning he found a serious palaver, the savages arguing coolly, the Chinamen raving. Sam Choon rushed up, begging him to act as umpire; and whilst eating his supper Roebelin learned the question in dispute. Sam Choon, as we know, had debts to collect in this village, for cloth and European goods, to be paid in jungle produce—honey, wax, gums, and so forth. The Subanos did not deny their liability—the natural man is absolutely truthful and honest. Nor did they assert that they could not pay. Their contention was simply that the merchandise had been charged

at a figure beyond the market rate. Another Chinaman had paid them a visit, and sold the same wares at a lower price. They proposed to return Sam Choon's goods unused, and to pay for anything they could not restore on this reduced scale. It was perfectly just in the abstract, and the natural man does not conceive any other sort of justice. Sam Choon could not dispute that his rival's cloth was equally good; it bore the same trade-mark, and those keen eyes were as well able to judge of quality as his own. But the trader everywhere has his own code of morals. Those articles for which the Subanos were indebted had been examined, and the price had been discussed at leisure; an honest man cannot break his word. Such diverse views were not to be reconciled. Roebelin took a practical course. He asked whether it could possibly be worth while to quarrel with these customers for the sake of a very few dollars? At the lower rate there would be a profit of many hundreds per cent. But the Chinaman, threatened with a loss in business, is not to be moved, for a while at least, by demonstrations of prudence.

Meantime the dispute still raged at the council fire, for the crew also were interested. Suddenly there was a roar. Several of them rushed across to Sam Choon and shouted great news. Roebelin understood afterwards. The catiff who had under-sold them was in the village at that moment! Whilst they jabbered in high excitement another roar burst out. One of the men, handling the rival's cloth, found a private mark—the mark of his *Hoey*. And it was that to which they all belonged. The *Hoey* may be described as a trade guild; but it is much more. Each of these countless associations is attached to one of the great secret societies, generally the T'ien T'i Hung, compared with which, for numbers and power, Freemasonry is but a small concern. By an oath which expressly names father, son, and brother, the initiated swear to kill any of their fellows who shall wrong a member of the *Hoey*. This unspeakable villain who sold cheap had wronged them all! He must die!

They pressed upon the chief in a body, demanding the traitor. All had arms and brandished them. Probably the savages would not have surrendered a guest on any terms; but this demonstration provoked them. In howling tumult they dispersed, seized their ready weapons, and formed line. The war-cry was not yet raised, but spears were levelled by furious hands. The issue depended on any chance movement. Suddenly from a distance came the blast of a cow-horn—a muffled bellow, but full of threat. The savages paused, turned, and rushed out, shouting. Roebelin caught a word, familiar by this time—'Bagabos.' He followed; but Sam Choon seized his arm. 'They put *rangjows*,' he said breathlessly. 'You cut foot, you die!' And in the

moonlight Roebelin saw boys running hither and thither with an armful of bamboo spikes sharp as knives at each end, which they drove into the earth.

Men unacquainted with the plan of this defence can only stand aside when *ranyows* are laid down. Roebelin waited with the Chinamen, tame and quiet enough now. The Subanos had all vanished in the forest, which rose, misty and still, across the clearing. Hours they watched, expecting each moment to hear the yell of savage fight. But no sound reached them. At length a long line of dusky figures emerged, with arms and ornaments sparkling in the moonlight. It was half the warriors returning.

They still showed sullenness towards the Chinamen; but the chief took Roebelin by the hand, led him to the foot of a tree upon which stood the largest house, and smilingly showed him the way up. It was not a pleasant climb. The ladder, a notched trunk, dripped with dew; it was old and rotten besides. Roebelin went up gingerly; the chief returned with a torch to light his steps before he had got half-way. But the interior was comfortable enough; far above the mosquito realm anyhow. Roebelin felt that an indefinite number of eyes were watching from the darkness as he made his simple preparations for turning in; but he saw none of them, and heard only a rustling. 'What a day I've had!' he thought, and fell asleep.

It was a roar and a rush like the crack of doom which woke him; shrieking and shouting, clang of things that fell, boom of great waves, and

thunder such as mortal never heard dominating all. A multitude of naked bodies stumbled over him and fell, a struggling, screaming heap. In an instant they were gone. He started up, but pitched headlong. The floor rolled elastic as a spring-board. It was black night. Dimly he saw clearer patches where a flying wretch, tossed against the wall of sticks, had broken it down. But the dust veiled them like a curtain. Gasping, on hands and knees, Roebelin sought the doorway. Again and again, even thus, he fell upon his side. And all the while that thundering din resounded. He understood now. It was a great earthquake. At length the doorway was found; holding on cautiously, Roebelin felt for the ladder. It was gone—broken in the rush.

Of the time that followed I do not speak. There were no more shocks. Slowly the sky whitened. He turned over the wreck—not a creature was there, dead or living. Great gaps showed in the floor and in the roof. Through one of these, against the rosy clouds, he saw a wreath of giant flowers, lilac and cinnamon, clinging to the tree above. It was *Vanda Sanderrama*!

But that plant and the others collected at the same time never reached Europe. Upon returning to Surigao with his treasures, Roebelin found little beyond heaps of rubbish on the site. Earthquakes have a home in Mindanao. But that of 1880 was the most awful on record as yet. Two years later he returned and brought home the prize.

A S O N G.

MY LADY wanders through the glade;
Across the sunshine and the shade
I see her pass.

She has a smile that's very sweet,
And softly fall her little feet
Upon the grass.

The woodland falls a-wondering;
Methinks the birds forget to sing,
A little space;
And through the brake a rabbit creeps,
Or here a timid squirrel peeps,
To see her face.

And where the trees their branches spread,
The dancing sunbeams overhead
Play hide-and-seek;
Come gliding, glancing through the green,
And steal the jealous leaves between,
To kiss her cheek.

And now and then, between the trees,
There comes a little whispering breeze,
And, passing there,
Flutters the muslin of her dress,
Or touches, soft as a caress,
Her radiant hair.

And every primrose in the dell,
And every nodding woodland bell,
To greet her tries;
And bashful violets, peeping through,
Rejoice to know that they are blue
As her sweet eyes.

Methinks that every living thing
To her a song of praise doth sing;
And only I,
That would so deep a love confess,
Am silent at her loveliness:
I know not why!

V. CRAIGIE HALKETT.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA.

By A BRITISH OFFICER ON THE SPOT.

THERE are probably comparatively few people who have had an opportunity of visiting Santiago de Cuba; indeed, there may be many whose ideas concerning the place before the outbreak of the late war between the United States and Spain were of a somewhat hazy description. Since the conclusion of the war, however, Santiago and its surroundings have been a source of interest to a large number of visitors from the United States and Jamaica, and a most interesting visit it is while recent events are still fresh in the memories of those who took part in them, and before all traces of the recent conflict have been effaced.

As we approach the entrance to the harbour, the inside is completely concealed from view by a projecting point of land; but on the right-hand side a good view is obtained of the Morro Castle, a most massive and picturesque pile, situated on high ground but quite out of date as a modern defence work, and just beyond the ruins of the Estrella Battery. On the left-hand side of the entrance, also on high ground, is a battery that was erected by the Spaniards when Santiago was first threatened, and armed with guns taken from the cruiser *Reina Mercedes*; while in the distance, to the west, may be seen the battered wreck of the *Almirante Oquendo*, one of Admiral Cervera's ill-starred squadron.

We are much struck with the extreme narrowness of the harbour-entrance, which is not more than two hundred yards in width. Passing on up the channel to the city, the spot where the *Merrimac* was sunk is soon reached (the top of one of her masts being now the only indication of her position), and soon afterwards the place where the Spaniards endeavoured to block the channel by sinking the *Reina Mercedes*. Like the *Merrimac*, she quite failed to serve the purpose intended, for neither vessel was ever the smallest obstruction to traffic to the city; and she has now been raised and taken in tow to the States.

Going up the channel one has leisure to admire the magnificence of the harbour and the beauty of the scenery surrounding it. An amphitheatre of verdure-clad hills, with ground gradually sloping up towards their base dotted with white houses, and the blue waters of the harbour overlooked by the city of Santiago, the whole bathed in the rays of a bright tropical sun, combine to produce a most charming picture.

Santiago is situated on the slope of a ridge which rises close to the water's edge, and possesses many fine and striking buildings. On the top of the ridge is the public square, with the Cathedral, Government offices, and what used to be the old Spanish Club (now used by the Americans for the same purpose); while a little way to the west is the hospital, a large building situated in a fine airy position. The streets, which appear to have been much neglected in the past, are being rapidly improved by the Americans; the macadamised surface, made on scientific principles, taking the place of the rough cobbles, which are most trying to the feet. The houses, built on the Spanish plan, are cool and airy; but the native huts are mere hovels, to improve the sanitation of which, and of the place generally, most vigorous measures are being adopted.

There is already a large American population in the place, and a fair percentage of foreigners, but few Spaniards. The natives, who talk Spanish, are of the yellow Cuban type; the negro, who abounds in Jamaica and other West Indian Islands, being not nearly so much in evidence.

With regard to the possibilities of the country, there are without doubt plenty of openings for trade of all kinds in the towns, while in the country fruit-growing and cattle-rearing suggest themselves as industries which would have an excellent chance of success. As to climate, it is of course hot. But in the hills the climate is most delightful; and even in the towns, with the improvement of sanitation and with ordinary precautions, there is no reason why the

health of the average European should suffer in the way that is generally supposed.

The American garrison at Santiago, which consists of an infantry regiment (now the 5th), occupies the old Spanish barracks, which are just outside the town, looking out over San Juan Hill, and are cool and airy. The officers are living at present in temporary huts, there being no proper officers' quarters, as the Spanish officers did not live in barracks. The men are clothed in a serviceable kit of brown breeches and gaiters, dark-blue flannel shirt, and brown felt hat, and are now being converted into mounted infantry. The officers are an excellent set of fellows, and both they and the men look very fit.

The chief attraction of Santiago, however, lies in the scene of the struggle between the Americans and Spaniards. The two battlefields are on San Juan Hill, some three miles from the city, and at El Caney, about three miles farther. El Caney, where the first severe action took place, is a village situated on rising ground, with an old blockhouse on a hill a quarter of a mile outside it. In front of the position the ground is hilly and covered for the most part with scrub; while the blockhouse itself stands out in a most conspicuous position, offering a splendid target for artillery fire. This was the scene of some very severe fighting, and was held by the Spaniards for a whole day in spite of very severe losses. The position on San Juan Hill was undoubtedly a much better one than at El Caney; and it was here that a most stubborn resistance was offered to the advance of the Americans. The ridge of the hill is somewhat in the shape of a crescent, and had a small blockhouse in the centre; while, in front, the ground slopes rapidly down to the San Juan River. At the foot of the hill the ground is flat and open for about half a mile, when it rises again up to another ridge. This ground in wet weather, such as we are told there was at the time, must have been exceedingly marshy and have greatly impeded progress. In rear, the ground towards the city is undulating, with ideal hollows for supports and reserves, and covered with low brushwood which offers no obstacle to the advance of infantry, with a road (which has since been improved) leading to the city, screened the whole way from the view of the enemy. The Spanish first line was on the front slope of the hill, and occupied a most commanding position, with a clear field of fire in front. The real weakness of the Spanish position, especially after the capture of El Caney, lay in the flanks; but the Americans relieved them of all anxiety on this account, and delivered their attack in front. To an enemy adequately supplied with guns—and neither side was—the position would have been a good deal exposed, inasmuch as an effective enfilade-fire might have been brought to bear; but the Americans were too weak in guns for this to affect the situation. Indeed, American

officers say that of the three batteries that reached San Juan for the opening attack, one was put out of action by long-range rifle-fire before it ever fired a shot.

The Spaniards held their first position with determination, inflicting severe losses on the enemy, until the Americans succeeded in crossing the open ground in front, and were about to deliver the final attack, when they abandoned their trenches and occupied their second position, about half a mile in rear. The Americans, after carrying the first position, threw up trenches along the crest of the ridge; but, in spite of exposure and the most miserable food, the Spaniards held their second position for close on a fortnight, when the capitulation of Santiago was signed.

The tree under which the negotiations took place is now one of the chief objects of interest; but was being so mutilated by persons anxious for a piece as a memento that it is now protected by a double barbed-wire fence.

Mention has already been made of the Morro Castle at the entrance to the harbour; but perhaps a little more concerning it may be of interest. The landing-place is in a little cove just inside the entrance, completely concealed from view outside. From there a steep and rather rough road leads up to the Morro Castle, situated on a small plateau about one hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level. It is a charming situation, with a magnificent view in all directions, and fanned by the delightful freshness of the sea-breeze. The Castle has been little damaged during the war, as it was so badly armed that the Americans could afford to practically ignore it. It is a fine specimen of the fortifications of the past, with its massive loopholed walls, turrets, and bastions; but, according to modern ideas of permanent works, quite out of date. At the present time a detachment of the American infantry regiment stationed at Santiago garrisons the place, the men living inside the Castle, while huts outside are used as officers' quarters, hospital, and offices; and a road has now been made connecting it by land with Santiago. To the east of the Castle itself the Spaniards had a battery of some eight guns of about 7-inch calibre, one of which was dismounted by an American shell; but these guns were as antiquated and useless as those in the Castle. They were mounted on the carriage-and-slide principle, and fired cast-iron projectiles, the heads of which were somewhat longer in proportion to their calibre than ours. The elevating-gear was of the most primitive pattern, consisting of a long vertical screw, with a T-headed handle reaching considerably above the level of the gun. The artillerymen concerned with the laying must have occupied a most exposed position, for, besides the gunlayer, the elevating gunners (and two must have been required) would have to stand up on the slide in a manner most conspicuous

to the enemy. Traversing, too, must have been no easy matter, for the emplacements were quite innocent of racers of any description, and no facilities for the supply of ammunition seem to have been provided.

At the foot of the Morro Hill, just inside the harbour, is the Estrella Battery, which was armed with the same useless class of weapons as the Morro, and is now in ruins. The only modern guns available for the defence of the harbour were those taken from the *Reina Mercedes*, the remainder being guns of the last century, as the dates on them showed, and were such as one is accustomed only to look upon as curiosities, and not as part of the defences of an important harbour against a modern fleet.

The Spaniards, realising the uselessness of the guns, appear to have relied on submarine mines to prevent the Americans entering the harbour; but, either from want of materials or scientific management, these seem to have been as ineffective as the guns, except, perhaps, as regards their moral effect, which is said to have had a great influence on the Americans, who had the recollection of the *Maine* disaster fresh in their memories.

The story of how Admiral Cervera's squadron, driven forth by orders from Madrid, endeavoured to escape from Santiago is now well known; but had the Spanish ships been able to make the speed of which they were capable, on paper, the result might have been vastly different. The four cruisers—the *Infanta Maria Theresa*, *Cristobal Colon*, *Vizcaya*, and *Almirante Oquendo*—were all modern vessels, and, on paper, capable of attaining a speed of twenty knots; and, had they been able to do this in reality, they would in all probability have easily escaped the American fleet—which had only steam up for seven knots—even allowing for a loss of speed due to fouling of their bottoms after several weeks of inactivity in Santiago harbour. Instead of this, the fastest of them, the *Cristobal Colon*, which got some ninety miles along the coast before she was run ashore, did not attain a speed of even fourteen knots. Thus it is that the last Spanish possessions in the West have passed into the hands of the conqueror, and the Spanish language is the only heritage left of the once vast and opulent western empire founded by the early conquistadores, Columbus, Cortes, and Pizarro.

THE ROMANCE OF A PROMISSORY NOTE.

By W. SCOTT KING.



romantic adventure my thirty-three years of mortal existence have been conspicuously bare. My constitution is normally tough, so that I have not had to wander Europe over in quest of golden health. My only brother is a staid bank-clerk, whose immaculate morals have effectually deprived his brother of even the reflected notoriety of being related to an absconder. My one sister for three years sustained the ambiguous rôle of lady's help, but never 'did' anything that I am aware of, at least nothing that necessitated her eldest brother being interviewed, except that eighteen months ago she 'did' marry her bereaved employer. Most fatal of all to any chance of adventurous experience, my heart is an exceptionally low-temperated organ, and up to the time of going to press has failed to embroil its proprietor in even the most conventional of love-entanglements. To close my inventory of disabilities, my sole and only adventure occurred six months ago; and maybe, when acquainted with it, the reader will conclude that only the utter absence of anything really sensational could have induced me to christen even that a romance.

For fifteen years I have been engaged every day, except Sunday and Bank-holidays, in identical fashion. My employers are a firm of City merchants, and, I believe, regard myself as their trusty man and true. However this may be, I

leave my bachelor 'home,' twelve miles away in the south suburbs, at exactly 9.24 every morning; and at exactly 4.47 P.M.—it has just been altered, to the discomposure of my punctual mind, to 4.49—I am stepping into my first-class compartment at Charing Cross. From this it will readily be credited that few know that twelve miles of suburban line better than I, and—what is more to my story—the business-men, clerks, and commercials who favour my train. Two or three score of them I meet as inevitably as I crack the top of my morning egg or run my coat-sleeve round my hat; and, though I am an Englishman, which means that I seldom dream of conversation with them, unless 'Good morning: damp!' is conversation, I know them from tip to toe and almost to the dates on their spade-guineas.

Among these unspoken-to intimates is a gentleman who has patronised my 4.49 for several years, and has not infrequently been my travelling companion. He is by far the most conspicuous of all the 4.49ers, owing to his singular aspect. In age he must certainly be beyond sixty, for his long shaggy hair and beard are quite white. He is tall but much bent, and his long neck is usually pushed forward. His eyes are large and wonderfully piercing, and look out from wrinkled, cavernous sockets, while his jaw—that unmistakable lower jaw—smacks indisputably of the Hebrew race.

At 4.49 one afternoon last November, on getting

into my compartment, I found it already occupied by the owner of the tell-tale jaw. I sat down on the same side as himself, but near to the opposite window, and, unfolding my *Mail*, was soon lost in South African muddles. The carriage jolted over the points outside G— Junction, and I glanced up. My companion had opened the somewhat ponderous black bag which he invariably carried, and had literally bestrewn the seat opposite and the vacant space between us with papers blue and white. As I have said, I am an Englishman, and so I resumed my study of South African affairs, merely indulging in that slight clearing of the throat which indicates isolation and reserve. I read on, and the blue and white papers fluttered and crackled around me. Chancing to look down below my *Mail* to flip some cigar-ash from my waistcoat, my eye involuntarily caught sight of a paper that had fluttered close to my side; and, though I lifted my head the next moment, the movement was too late to prevent my reading two words printed in clear black type—Promissory Note. Mr Chamberlain, President Kruger—all interest in them vanished in a second. 'The report of the South African Commission is'— Who cared what it was? What was written on that promissory note? With shame I confess it, but confess it I must, that my wontedly incurious and unspeculative mind took fire. I longed to drop my eyes again—just for one moment. Such a desire was wholly illegitimate and dishonourable, I knew; the paper was private and absolutely no concern of mine. 'Leave to servant-maids the prying into other people's correspondence,' I said to myself. The train rattled on. I looked down.

'DEAR SIR,—Your letter of this morning has terrified me. I know that I have long since worn out all your patience, having promised and promised, and not been able, unhappily, to keep my word. But, pray, sir, have mercy on me and mine once more. Should you carry out your threat of to-day's letter, I am for ever a ruined man, and my wife and little ones will be cast upon the streets. I have already paid, as you know, three times over the amount of the original advance; but if you will only have pity once more I will faithfully pledge myself to send £10 on December 21st, when my quarterly stipend falls due. If'—

I had read quite enough; I was sick. Fool that I had been to give way to my unseemly curiosity. But who could this unfortunate be, and who was the monster sitting in the other corner of my carriage? I have no natural disposition for knight-errantry, as I have suggested, and could never have ridden to the rescue of Johannesburg however piteous its appeal; yet for a brief moment there flickered in even my well-regulated heart a desire to lead there and then a single-handed raid upon the owner of that Israelitish jaw.

I turned my head. The papers had ceased for some time to rustle, and the explanation was plain. In the midst of his array of documents, lulled doubtless by the oscillation of the train, my companion had dropped his shaggy head upon his breast and was apparently asleep. My action which occupied the following minute is the only one I can confidently say—for I am never indeliberate—of which I am totally unable to give any explanation. With my eyes fixed on the sleeper, I picked up the promissory note and the imploring letter to which it was pinned, and, slowly tearing them into fifty pieces, dropped them out of the window, and saw them flash past like a tiny snowstorm. I then drew up the window as unfeliciously as a man who feels the draught, and, taking out my pocket-book, scribbled down the address I had noticed at the head of the suppliant letter. I should have said, further, that scrawled across the letter now lying a mile or more behind on the grassy embankment were the words in red ink, 'Proceed at once,' evidently directions to a manager or clerk.

I have sometimes reflected whether Nature did not design me for a forger or light-fingerer, for I am told these artists are total strangers to mental and cardiac perturbations while plying their craft, for I too, during this momentous act, felt a like immunity. The pump of my heart was as usual, for I slipped my hand into my waistcoat to ascertain. Exemplary organ!

The train began to slow up, and I knew that we were nearing the station at which my gaunt companion was accustomed to alight. We stopped.

'My dear sir,' I shouted, 'this is S—; I believe you get out here.'

'S—? Why, yes. Dear me! I've been asleep. Heavy day—tired.' He grasped his bag.

'Let me assist you to collect your papers.' I did so, and succeeded in bundling him out on the platform as the impatient guard shouted 'Right away.'

Now, of course, I saw perfectly well that my act of merciful dishonesty would be of no service to the owner of the signature at the foot of the note unless he was made acquainted with the fact that the legal evidence of his liability was no longer in existence. On reaching my rooms, therefore, I wrote a brief note stating that no further fear need be entertained nor threats regarded, as the signed note was destroyed; and, though destroyed against the knowledge of the lender, as he, the borrower, had already repaid the principal and a legitimate interest, he need have no scruples in reaping the benefit of the act. The next day, when alone in my office, I typed this letter to avoid committing my handwriting, which I should labour in vain to disguise, and posted it at a pillar-box in the Strand.

During the following two or three weeks nothing transpired with any bearing upon my escapade. I caught the 4.49 at Charing Cross as

usual each afternoon, and several times saw the tall, bent figure with the Jewish under-jaw, who likewise appeared as usual. The only precaution I allowed myself to indulge in—for, strange to say, I remained on most unremorseful terms with my conscience—was to avoid getting into the same compartment with him. On Saturday I am always liberated at one o'clock, but still catch the 4.49; as it is my custom, being of rather an antiquarian turn, to have a few hours' browse in the Egyptian or Assyrian department of the British Museum.

One Saturday, a month later, I determined to yield to an awakened inquisitiveness and have a look, if possible, at the house occupied by the impecunious borrower and his 'wife and little ones.' The address I had scribbled in my pocket-book was of a house named 'Sunnydene,' in a suburb of North London, and I resolved to spend my half-holiday in a trip thither. Going as far as the 'bus would take me, I got out and found upon inquiry that I had still a walk of some two miles. This was to my taste, for the air was frosty and the afternoon just right for walking; and as I marched along I could not help wondering for the thousandth time what sort of a reception my strange note had received at Sunnydene. My reflections may have been coloured slightly by my bachelor position, nevertheless I certainly did surmise that probably the 'wife and little ones' were the luxuries which had driven the unhappy man into the clutches of my gaunt railway companion.

Half-an-hour's walking brought me to a pleasant village-like cluster of houses, though mostly, alas! of the red-and-white villa type of which I am a sworn enemy. But, as if to atone for these snug abominations, there stood a little way off from the main road a quaint little church with a distinctly Norman tower. Now, ecclesiastical architecture is another of my specialities, and I immediately promised myself a pleasant hour in examination of this wayside shrine. In fact, I quite overlooked for a moment my original errand, and found myself trying the iron ring of the church door almost before I knew it. The door was locked.

'Where can I obtain the key?' I inquired of a boy loitering near.

'At the parson's, next door,' he replied.

I retraced my way a few yards up the road, and was about to enter the long wooden gate which had been indicated to me, when my eye caught the name painted on the top rail: 'Sunnydene.' My patience! The parson was my borrower then! What should I do now? Kill two birds with the same stone, said my practical good sense; so I opened the gate. As I did so there came from behind a laurel shrubbery by the side of the house a lady; but such a lady as, impervious bachelor though I am, I am free to confess I have never seen the like of before or since.

I must be allowed to pause a moment to tell you what she was like, or rather to tell you that I absolutely cannot tell you at all. She was tall and with the bearing of a Meredithan Queen. Her dress, I think my sister would say, was poor, almost to shabbiness; but I had no eyes for it, but only for the eyes—the magnificent black, passionate eyes—of the lady herself. Around her shoulders there fell a perfect storm of coal-black curls, which surrounded as with a gleaming frame of ebony a face of strange, un-English beauty.

Each chapter of my one and only adventure was destined to reveal to me unexpectedness in my own nature; for at this moment my heart—an organ in which I had been totally uninterested except for its association with valvular weakness—demeaned itself in an altogether surprising fashion, and commenced to thump in most unbecoming admiration. I raised my hat as she came towards the gate, and, hazarding the conclusion that she was the rector's wife, inquired whether it were possible for me to obtain the keys of the church. The lady's face was not a merry one, nor had it any of the complacent fulness one associates with the mistress of a country rectory. On the contrary, it seemed worn and lined, while there flitted over it a look of hungry wistfulness. My civil inquiry, however, brought a faint tinge to the dark cheeks and a light to the lustrous eyes, while the voice which answered, 'Oh yes, with pleasure,' rang with a deep musical note. When she returned with the key we went together into the frost-covered burying-ground and round the ivy-covered chancel to the vestry door.

'I am much interested in old churches,' I remarked, 'and often spend a leisure Saturday in exploring those in my own neighbourhood. I was taken at once with your fine old Norman tower here. But, pray, do not let me detain you any further. I will return the key to the rectory in half-an-hour.'

'I have nothing whatever to do,' replied my dusky guide, with an air of weariness, 'and it will give me pleasure to hear what you think of our ancient little church—that is, if my presence will not disturb your explorations;' and she turned those wonderful eyes of hers upon me.

I replied—never mind what I replied; only the words had seldom got in my way so awkwardly before.

After inspecting the long, cool nave and the tiny tessellated chancel, we sat a while in the quaintly-carved choir-stalls while the dying light of the winter sun threw the purple and crimson of the eastern window across the altar steps.

'What an enviable existence to live away from all the frantic roar of the City,' I said half-aloud; 'and have constant access to an historic retreat like this. I should fancy a life under such tranquil conditions knows little, if anything, of what we call worry or care.'

Was it crime, I thought, to thus trench on what might be sensitive ground? Once again those deep-set eyes were turned upon me.

'Is that what you think? Ah! there, how deceptive must externals be! You take me probably for the rector's wife, and imagine I spend my mornings listening to the roll of the organ, and my afternoons in driving round in my pony-carriage paying four o'clock calls or distributing coal-tickets?'

'Well?'

'I am not. The rector is an invalid, or fancies himself so, and winters abroad. My husband is only the curate, one of the starving curates you read of in the *Church Times* every week, and far, far more in need of a winter on the Riviera than his rector;' and the face beside me, shadowed by the old oak stall, flamed with intensity and anger.

The church grew dark, and the colours of the east window were as sullen patches of blood upon the floor.

'I must go,' I said abruptly.

On my way back, in the corner of the 'bus, I pondered on my encounter. Still before me burned the passionate eyes of the curate's wife. How I hated that selfish valetudinarian lounging on the Riviera, squandering upon bath-chairs and peaches the living-wage of his sickly substitute at home! And so it was from this distressed little family, above all from the housekeeping of that queenly lady, that the brutal under-jaw had exacted his usurious interest! Had my felony in the 4.49 brought a moment's relief to that pinched rectory, or one second's respite from the agonising discussion of ways and means to the owner of the glorious eyes?

'I hope so,' I muttered as I ran into Charing Cross Station to catch the 7.5.

The following Monday afternoon I was sauntering up the platform, waiting for my train, when I observed coming towards me with the inevitable black bag—infernal machine I thought it, with an inkling as to its probable contents—the tall, gaunt figure of the money-lender. Again yielding to impulse—I distrust calculation now—I followed him into a compartment.

'Looks likely for snow.'

'Very. I hope it will come.'

'“A mild January”—you know the old saying.'

In five minutes we were in full swing of conversation.

'We ought to be friends by this time,' said the Hebrew. 'We travel together often enough.'

By the time we reached S—— we had struck up quite a friendly intimacy. From that day—why, of course I do not know, unless you believe in predestination—I regularly looked out for him if I arrived first, as I usually did, being a most punctual individual, and he for me if by phenomenal chance I was cutting it fine. How I had patience to talk to such a bloodsucker

may surprise you, but it surprised me more; still I had. I was dimly awaiting developments.

One evening, in the early spring, he remarked as we met at the station: 'You are a bachelor, you say; so am I. Only you are a young bachelor, and I am an old one. What do you say to turning in to dinner with me to-night? You can catch the 11 down.'

I went.

At the little station at S—— a solemn man in livery met us, and, relieving my companion of his bag, led the way to a trim little brougham that was in readiness outside. The house at which we pulled up was large and low, and almost totally hidden from the road by trees; but when I entered the wide hall, and a moment later the dining-room, I found that those gloomy firs and hollies enshrouded an art gallery, a museum, and a mansion combined. On every hand was costly furniture of no English make, rich curtains, skins, lamps, all redolent of Eastern luxuriousness. Taken off my guard by the sight, I broke into what for me was a perfect dithyramb of ecstasy; but, instantly remembering how the wherewithal had been procured, I had to summon iron self-restraint to keep back curses from my lips.

We sat down to dinner. Behind our curiously-carved chairs, a vigilant being, with a Southern skin and impeccable linen, watched our glasses and our plates. The pheasant and Burgundy were A1 to my chop-accustomed palate; but ever and again they stuck in my throat: had not their purchase involved nameless indignities to my lady of Sunnysdene?

Dinner over, my host led me to a padded masculine boudoir with heavenly chairs and equally celestial cigars; and, having donned a species of loose dressing-gown of Syrian hue, broke the silence, the almost total silence, which he had maintained since I entered his paradise.

'Do you know my name?' he began.

'Why, yes,' I replied; 'Kendrick.'

He smiled.

'No, not exactly. By the way'—he looked sharply at me—'I was a little amazed when you addressed me by that name first some weeks ago when we came down together.'

Now for the second or possibly the third time in my life I blushed—blushed as I saw the error I had committed. It was from the destroyed promissory note that I had learned this name Kendrick.

'Nevertheless, that is your name,' I managed to say.

'It is the name of my chief clerk,' he answered; 'my own name is Solomon. Ah! I see that you have already divined my nationality. I advertise, it is true, under the name of Kendrick, "a gentleman with a considerable amount of uninvested capital"'—and he laughed in a way that made me feel a trifle uneasy—'in deference to Gentile sensitiveness;' and he laughed again.

I had accepted Mr Kendrick's or Solomon's.

invitation to dinner, possessed by a somewhat nebulous purpose or hope of again getting on the track of my recent exploits; otherwise, not fifty traction engines should have dragged me into this extortioner's den. I now ventured a shot.

'You are a money-lender?' He nodded. 'Had you no anxiety as to who might be the next called before the Royal Commission?'

He raised himself on his elbow, and gave vent to what I presume, in the absence of certain knowledge, is a Hebrew form of chuckling. I have produced the same noise myself once or twice; but that was when my tea went the wrong way.

'Anxiety? No; by Our Fathers, no! My clients have more to lose than I by figuring in a witness-box. Do you know from what class they are principally drawn?'

The question was rather hissed out at me than asked.

'Tradesmen who desire to put in a new shop-front, embarrassed lordlings, young sparks awaiting the demise of maiden aunts?' I answered, with affected indifference.

'Ph—ph—h. Not at all. Clergymen—parsons, rectors, curates—infernal curates.' His eyes came from the back of their caverns and glared at their entrance like a tiger's. My pulse became brisk.

'Why the oath, Mr Solomon?' I inquired.

'Why?' The monosyllable fairly rang through the room and soon penetrated the walls, till I fancied fifty mocking money-lenders were echoing us outside. He sprang from his lounge chair, and, going over to a massive inlaid cabinet, unlocked a small drawer; and, taking from it what appeared to be a leathern case, returned to the hearthrug and stood before me. 'You ask why, my friend. Shall I tell you? Shall I reveal to a friend of one night and a few train talks the secret tragedy of this house?'

I did not answer; my eyes were fixed on his face.

'I will. I will tell you a story I have told to no living man; though why I should'—He did not finish the sentence. Then he continued: 'But first look at this, and tell me—tell me on your word as a—a Christian—did you ever gaze on a fairer, lovelier face than that?'

He handed me an oval-shaped cream-coloured opal, framed in softest Persian of olive-green colour, and I rose to the light to view it. Yet one more self-revelation—my tongue did not cry out, and my colour was obedient, though my heart lifted itself to the roof of my throat; for there, exquisitely staining the creamy surface of the opal, was my lady of the wondrous eyes. I knew it at a glance. For a full fifty seconds I gazed at it and made no answer, though I knew two gimlet eyes were boring into my back.

'No,' I said, turning calmly round; 'never. It is the loveliest face I ever saw.'

The salt sea washed a moment the dark cavern, and the Jew groaned aloud. 'It is my daughter—my only child—my only one in all this "strange land"—Jessica. But she is dead.'

The deep caverns filled again.

I gasped, 'But I'—

He went on unheeding.

'Ten years ago I lost her. After her mother's death we lived together—she and I—in this house, no father and child more happy nor contented in all our scapegoat race. And then she died: not of fever nor of any other sickness—that I could have endured, for then she would have been gathered to her people; but of something which to a Jew is a million times worse than the dissolution of the body: she renounced the faith of her fathers.'

My cigar had gone out, and I wondered whether the Burgundy had been doctored. He resumed:

'When, I do not know—I never knew—but some time when I was away in the City, from curiosity no doubt, she strayed into the "High Place"—bastard architecture and worse rites—you perhaps noticed as we turned up the avenue here; and—and, well, the curate in charge there noticed her, as well he might, and spoke to her, and with his cunning wiles got round her gentle heart, and wooed her from the ancient faith, and wooed her to himself. I never saw him—his God help him if I had!—but he wrote and asked for my Jessica for his wife. I replied; but my sweet one faded, lost the glory from her eyes; and one day, when I returned, I found my nest empty. He had stolen her from me.'

A murmur of desolation seemed to be creeping through the house, and I was too preoccupied with my thoughts to say a word.

'I never lifted a finger to trace them,' he went on; 'but I cursed them both for ever—sleeping and waking, in life and in death: a Jew can curse you may have heard. But I swore to have my revenge; and I have had it. I send my "private" circulars to every clergyman and curate on the "List," and—well, scores are the white-faced hypocrites that I have brought to beggary and the clods.'

I shuddered.

'But'—and he rose, and, coming across the hearth, stooped his haggard form over me—'I am a lonely man, and know not the day of my death; and I have repented. And what is more—you have never heard of such a thing before—but, Jew though I am, if I could find her and her—husband, I would forgive her and him; by the tombs of my fathers I swear it!'

I sprang to my feet. For the first time in my life, and possibly the last, I knew that I held the ace of trumps in my hand.

'Sit down, Mr Solomon,' I said, with an emphasis of power unique in my speech; for I felt sure of my ground, and wished to play my

card with fitting majesty. 'May I ask you to sit down a moment; I think it is my turn to speak.'

He stared; and, with a look of mortification, as I thought, went back to his seat, exhausted. Evidently he thought he had poured out his heart at the feet of a stone.

With absolute clearness the main threads of this strange affair disentangled themselves in my mind. The curate of Sunnysdene, being in impoverished circumstances, through the niggardliness of his sweating superior, had applied to 'Mr Kendrick' for a loan, not knowing that by so doing he was asking help of the outraged father of his Jewish wife. And Mr Kendrick or Solomon, ignorant of the name or whereabouts of his son-in-law, had been unconsciously throttling the very daughter for whom his relenting old soul was hungering. 'Plain as a pikestaff!' I summed up. Now to play the Fairy Godmother, and say my own *Peccavi*!

'Mr Solomon, you have spoken of forgiveness. I accepted your invitation to dinner to-night, half resolved, if circumstances favoured, to ask you to extend an exercise of that virtue towards myself.'

The Jew hardly seemed to be listening, and, as I thought afterwards, probably imagined that under an assumed name I myself had got into his clutches, and was about to ask for clemency on the plea of having tasted salt with him.

'Go on,' he said, dejectedly.

'May I ask then, whether within the last few months you have lost or mislaid a promissory note belonging to a person named?—'

'Ah!' He jerked his head forward. 'Let me see. You rode in the carriage with me the night I dozed so stupidly over my papers. Now I remember. It never struck me to'—

'To imagine I took it,' I finished promptly. 'But I did. My eye happened to catch sight of the letter to which it was attached. I was indignant, tore it up, and threw it out of the window while you were dozing, as you say.'

His blood flowed perceptibly under his olive skin.

'It was an illegal act—grossly illegal;' but, as if diverted from that track by a fresh remembrance, 'the rascal never replied to any letters sent afterwards, though we threatened him with an injunction. But, not possessing the legal voucher, we could not prosecute. Was that your doing too?'

'That is going a little too fast,' I replied, revelling in the unfamiliar consciousness of having for once the upper hand. 'A little too fast, Mr Solomon. What I want to ask you is, will you give me the assurance of your pardon for my conduct in destroying the note? If you will, I will give you something in return—a piece of information—which I believe you will consider worth your purchase.'

'What is that?'

I copied my host's behaviour of ten minutes before, and bent over him.

'I will tell you where you may find your daughter, your lost Jessica, and whom and where her curate-husband is at this moment.'

'You will?' he shrieked. 'Who? Where?'

'He is the man who signed the promissory note that I tore up, and he lives at Sunnysdene.'

When I was a child I was kissed and fondled by my mother, no doubt; but I do not recall the experience. But the next moment, not a mother's, but the bony arms of the sunken-eyed Jew, were wound around me, while the old cry, that still, they say, may be heard at evening by the pensive wanderer in far off Venice, was being sobbed into my neck, 'Jessica, my child.'

I now live upon my laurels—my past. I still catch the 4.49 at Charing Cross. But I have an inward conviction that my one romance is over; and yet it is not altogether over. For, once every week at least, I get out at the station one before my own—not drawn by the prospect of pheasant and Burgundy, though they or kindred delights always await me; but once more, and this time without the accessories of carven stalls and eastern windows, to bask in the gladsome society of the Lady of the Wondrous Eyes.

THE STAGE SUPER: WHAT HE DOES AND HOW HE DOES IT.

By LOUIS MELLARD.



YOU have all seen at the bottom of your theatre programmes the phrase, 'Soldiers, peasants, mob, &c.' It refers to the harmless, necessary supers. And you would be surprised if you only knew what a variety of human beings that cold, brief phrase covers.

The regular super—that is, the man who is either

attached, more or less permanently, to a theatre or big company—may be roughly divided into two classes: the man who is a 'broken' third or fourth rate actor, and the man who hopes some day to be a 'star.' Of course, in addition to these, there are the 'occasionals'—men who are engaged casually for particular occasions. This kind usually blossom out at pantomime time. They seem to come from nowhere in particular and retire

eventually to the same place. The writer once asked such a man, who had been engaged for a special performance of *Hamlet*, what he thought of the play. 'Well,' he replied, 'it's a good play, well written and all that; but it's full of old jokes!'

When a company runs short of a man for a small speaking-part, a likely super is sometimes given a chance. This is how a super, thus given an opportunity of distinguishing himself, once delivered a few short lines descriptive of a man being picked up after a cab-accident: 'The hansom cab was picked up off the Esplanade, with a handkerchief tightly tied around its mouth; when removed, it was found to be perfectly dead.' Still, the manager gave him another trial the following evening, when he acquitted himself as follows: 'The Esplanade was picked up off the man, with the hansom cab tightly tied around his mouth,' &c. He was sent to the back row again—or maybe farther. This is not an unusual sample of what the average super can do. Naturally, therefore, managers look askance at training him.

Mr F. R. Benson once, in coaching two 'armies' of supers for a battle-scene, had some difficulty in persuading the weaker side to be conquered. Even at the first performance the vanquished force, which was led by a pugnacious Irishman, upset traditional usages by severely mauling their victors. So Mr Benson interviewed the Irish leader. 'Look a-here, sir,' said that worthy; 'shure, if you want us to be beaten you must put me in the other army. That's the only way.' Next night the suggestion was adopted; and after that the two armies 'fought correctly.'

A good story is told against a well-known theatrical manager who, during the rehearsal of a modern military drama, entered the theatre at the moment the stage manager was giving the necessary instructions to the supers who were to represent the army. He silently watched them drill for some time, and then bawled out: 'Not a bit like it! Not a bit like it! Why don't you try to look like real soldiers?' After scolding them soundly for five minutes, and strutting up and down the stage for their instruction, his disgust may be imagined when the stage manager succeeded in whispering into his ear: 'Go easy; they're some of the Coldstream Guards!' History does not chronicle what he said; but probably his language was about as bad as that of the manager who, noticing that something was going wrong during the grave-digging scene in *Hamlet*, asked for the reason of the trouble. 'It's the "First Grave-digger,"' whispered 'Horatio.' 'He says that unless you send him the price of a square meal he's going to eat the loaf they're using for Yorick's skull.' That super got his supper.

The super's lot is not a happy one. There is not much of beer and skittles about it—but sometimes a lot of cold water.

At Nottingham, a year or so back, a drama

was produced entitled *A Dark Secret*—one of those dramas abounding in realistic effects. Amongst other things, a large tank containing many thousand gallons of water was fixed on the stage to represent a river. On the surface of this floated a small steamer and one or two boats. It was the business of one of the supers to punt across in a boat; and, not being much of a punter (at least in that way), he failed to make much progress. The stage being darkened, he did not perceive, until almost too late, that he was gradually stepping to the farther end of the boat; and so, in order to prevent himself from falling overboard, and thus spoiling the action of the play, he carefully stepped out into the three feet of water. He was surprised to receive an immense round of applause. The audience thought it was meant for a 'swimming act.'

'Twas a lucky slip—much more so than that of a poor super who acted as 'ghost' to a certain well-known 'Mazeppa' about forty years ago. In those days, when *Mazeppa* was always a big draw, every little stock-company used to play its own little version. The better-class theatres, as far as possible, used to make the horsemanship portion of the play a strong feature. A celebrated 'star' was playing the piece for some weeks in the Midlands, and had one of his supers (who had formerly been a circus rider) made up to look very much like him, the said 'star' being a wretched rider. The trick was cleverly done, and of course the audience always supposed the super rider to be the 'star.' In this particular production, the runs up the mountain-side were most elaborately arranged, and the flight of the wild horse was the 'great startling effect' of the evening. One night, the horse and its burden fell with a tremendous crash from the flies to the stage. The curtain was promptly rung down, while the audience rose to its feet horror-stricken; but presently the 'star' was led forward staggering as though badly injured. In a weakened voice he said that in spite of his pains he would endeavour to finish his part. He did so, amidst repeated bursts of enthusiastic applause. But the poor super lay in the hospital five weeks, then died.

The makeshifts of needy actors are proverbially funny and smart; but the makeshifts of managers are often equally so. Phelps had an ingenious way of making a big 'crowd' when his means did not allow of him paying for extra supernumeraries. During his management of Sadler's Wells he produced *Henry V.*; and in the march-past before Agincourt the troops defiled behind a set-piece which rose breast-high. Tussauds modelled eighty wax heads, which were fixed on wickerwork dummy figures clad in the armour of the period. There were in reality only forty live supers; and each of them carried two of these figures, one on either side of him, attached to a framework which was lashed to the man's waist. Hence

it appeared that they were marching three abreast. With banners streaming, drums beating, and trumpets braying, the stage was seemingly crowded with soldiers; and the illusion was so perfect that, probably, the audience never perceived the deception.

Another instance of smartness in this way was witnessed in Berlin not very long ago. Engel, the manager of Kroll's Summer Theatre—a very popular resort—announced the *Prophet*. He was asked by a pressman how he would arrange the elaborate Coronation Procession on so small a stage. But he refused the information with a mysterious smile. When the procession was about to start, the curtain dropped, and the orchestra went on playing the March. When eventually the last few bars were reached the curtain went up again, showing three white-robed choristers marching off, as if forming the rear of the long procession.

Four-legged animals in drama are, of course, a very common sight to-day. Although they are often of far more importance than the mere super, they have an affinity to that class—for theirs is no speaking-part—unless one counts the bark of a dog as such! A little time ago the writer met an actor who was taking the part of villain in a play wherein a big mastiff seizes him at the back of the neck just as he (the villain) was about to murder the heroine. 'Nasty part that of yours. How do you manage to escape nightly being bitten by that big brute of a dog?' 'Not

a nice part, it's true,' he answered; 'but the dog is well trained. He is kept without food for a few hours before the show. A piece of cooked liver is tied to my neck. He is held in the wings till the cue comes, then he rushes on to me for his supper; and the curtain goes down on a very effective tableau. I don't object to the dog—it's the liver!'

The mention of stage dogs brings to mind an amusing incident that occurred in a well-known theatrical agent's office last summer. In came a rough-looking little man wearing a check suit that once used to speak out for itself, but was now silenced by the heavy hand of time. The man was followed by a dog of attractive appearance. The visitor said he did a 'tramp act,' assisted by the animal. Then they gave an exhibition of themselves and were certainly above the average. 'What are your terms?' the agent queried. 'Ten pounds a week.' 'I'll give you two.' The imitation tramp—but he was not far off the real thing—looked with a sad, reproachful eye at the agent and silently backed out of the office, the dog meekly following. However, within a few seconds the man returned, quickly closing the door to exclude his partner, who clamoured to get in. 'I'll take it,' he said, in a hurried whisper. 'Where's the contract? I'm real broke, so it's a clear case of push; but for heaven's sake don't mention the price where the dog can hear you!'

THE STORY OF AN ORCHID.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.



THE discovery of *Phalænopsis Sanderiana* was an interesting event; nor for botanists alone. Some thoughtful persons always incline to credit a legend or an assertion current among savages, so long as it deals with facts within the limits of their knowledge. Human beings are truthful by instinct; and if we can assure ourselves that no motive tempts them to falsehood, it is more likely than not that even an improbable story will prove correct. The rule applies in all matters of natural history. Numberless are the reports concerning beasts and birds and reptiles accepted now which were a mock for generations; numberless, also, one must add, are the reports too grotesque for discussion. For imagination asserts itself in the case of animals, and gives a motive, though unconscious, for the wildest inventions. But it is rarely excited by plants. When a savage describes some flower he has seen, the statement may be trusted, 'barring errors;' and they will probably be slight, for his power of observation, and his memory in matters of this sort, are alike wonderful. A collector of plants who knows his business encourages the

natives to talk; often enough they give him valuable information. The first hint of *Calla Pentlandii*, the yellow Egyptian lily or 'arum,' was furnished by a Zulu who came from a great distance to visit a relative in the service of Captain Allison. I may venture to tell secrets which will be common property soon. A blue *Calla* and a scarlet have been found—both of them on report of Kaffirs.

The story of *Phalænopsis Sanderiana* is a striking instance. Its allied species, *grandiflora* and *amabilis*, reached Europe in 1836 and 1847 respectively. Their snowy whiteness and graceful habit prepared the world for a burst of enthusiasm when *Phalænopsis Schilleriana*, the earliest of the coloured species, was brought from the Philippines in 1860. The Duke of Devonshire paid Messrs Rollison a hundred guineas for the first plant that flowered. Such a price was startling then. Reported at Manila, it set the Spaniards talking and inquiring. Messrs Rollison had sent an agent to collect *Phalænopsis* there, who presently reported a scarlet species! No one he could find had seen it, but the natives spoke confidently, and he hoped to forward a consignment without delay. But years and years passed.

The great firm of Rollison flourished, decayed, and vanished, but that blessed consignment was never shipped.

Other collectors visited the Philippines. They also reported the wonder, on hearsay, and every mail brought them reiterated instructions to find and send it at any cost. Now here, now there, the pursuers hunted it to a corner; but, when they closed, it was elsewhere. Meantime the settled islands had been explored gradually. Many fine things escaped attention, as we know at this day; but a flower so conspicuous, so eagerly demanded and described, could not have been missed. As years went by, the red *Phalaenopsis* became a joke. Interest degenerated into mockery.

As a matter of fact, it is very improbable that the plant had ever been in Manila, or that a white man had beheld it. For it is found only in an islet to the west of Mindanao, the most southerly of the Philippine group. Mindanao itself is not yet explored, much more occupied, though the Spaniards pushed farther and farther inland year by year. Seafaring Tagalas may have visited that islet, and seen the red *Phalaenopsis*. When they heard, at Manila, how an English duke had paid some fabulous amount for a flower of the same genus, they would naturally mention it. And so the legend grew.

In 1881, a score of years afterwards, the conquest of Mindanao was so far advanced that the Spanish mail steamers called there. When Mr Sander of St Albans heard this intelligence he thrilled with hope, as has been told. Mr Roebelin had instructions, of course, to inquire for the red *Phalaenopsis*; Mr Sander's experience teaches him that local rumours should never be disregarded. But the search had been very close and very long. Perhaps there was not another man in Europe who thought it possible that the marvel could exist.

Mr Roebelin is still living, I believe, and he could tell of some lively adventures on that first visit to Mindanao. Constantly he heard of the red *Phalaenopsis*; it was *en l'air*, he wrote, using the expression in two senses. At the northern settlements they directed him south; at the eastern, west, and so round the compass. But he had other matters in hand, and contented himself with inquiries.

I do not learn whether it was accident or information which led him to the little island Davao on his second visit, in 1883. He may have sailed thither on chance, for a traveller is absolutely certain of finding new plants on an untrodden shore in these seas. Anyhow Roebelin knew the quest was over, the riddle solved triumphantly, before landing.

The half-breed Chinaman, Sam Choon, was personally conducting him on this occasion also; he found the vessel (a native *prau*, of course), boatmen, provisions, and the rest. Everything was at

the collector's disposal; but Sam Choon took a cargo of 'notions' on his own account, to trade when opportunity arose.

Davao lies, I understand, some sixty miles from Mindanao. Its inhabitants are Papuan, thorough bred of the brown variety. Roebelin was deeply struck with the appearance of the warriors who swarmed to the beach when his intention of landing was understood. A body of men so tall and stalwart can scarcely be found elsewhere, and for graceful carriage or activity they could not be surpassed. A red clout was their only wear, besides ornaments and weapons. They had the kinkled hair of the race (not wool), bleached with lime, and dyed yellow. Very strange and pleasing is the effect of these golden mops, lustrous, if not clean, decked with plumes and fresh flowers. But admiration came afterwards. When Roebelin saw the big fellows mustering in haste, armed with spears and bows, stone-headed maces which the European soldier could scarcely wield, great swords set with sharks' teeth, and outlandish tools of every sort for smashing and tearing, he regarded the spectacle from another point of view. They ran and leapt, brandishing their weapons, halloed, and roared, and sang, with Papuan vivacity. The vessel approaching was too small to alarm them. Laughter predominated in the uproar. But this was no comfort. Men are cheerful with a feast in view.

Sam Choon, however, kept up his spirits. 'Them chaps make rumpus all time,' he said. 'We see.' He held up a green bough shipped for the purpose. It was all laughter now and gesticulation. Every Papuan tore a branch from the shrubs around and waved it boisterously. 'Them no hurt,' said Sam Choon. 'Good trade.' The Chinaman was as careful of his person as one need be, and experienced in the ways of such people. Roebelin took courage. As they neared the surf, the whole body of islanders rushed towards them, splashed through the shallows whooping, dived beneath the wave, and came up at the vessel's side. Ropes were tossed to them, and they swam back again. But the first yellow head popped up just where Roebelin was seated. Among the feathers twisted in it, draggled now, he saw a spray—surely an *Aerides*! but bluish-red, unlike any species known. The savage grinned and shouted, whirling the hair like an aureole around his glistening face, threw one brawny arm into the air, and at a stroke reached the bows. Another shot up; another. The sea was peopled in an instant, all grinning and shouting breathlessly, all whirling their golden locks. Among the flowers with which every head was decked, Roebelin saw many *Phalaenopsis*. And most of them were ruddy purple!

Sam Choon lay to whilst the islanders swam ashore and formed a chain; then, at a word, they ran up the beach full speed; making a noise, says Roebelin, which reminded him of the earth-

quake he had lately felt. Simultaneously the crew paddled their hardest, also yelling in the shrill Chinese way. The *prau* sped like a flash, but half-full of water. Beyond the surf a mob seized and carried it ashore.

Papuans have no acquaintance with ceremony. Paying little attention to their chiefs, they are not apt to discriminate among strangers. All alike seized one of these new friends—who brought trade!—slapped him about the body, and hugged him. Roebelin had been subjected to merciless shampooing occasionally in Indian *hammams*; but he never felt the like of that welcome. It was *massage* by machinery.

The women had come on the scene now. Though they took no part, they mingled with the warriors, and showed quite as much assurance as is becoming. But they are not by any means such fine creatures as the men, and they do not allow themselves—or they are not allowed—the curious attraction of yellow hair. Roebelin noticed a few, however, worthy to be helpmates of those superb animals; one girl in especial, nearly six feet high, whose figure was a model, face pleasing and expressive, full of character.

These people live in trees like the Subanos of Mindanao. As soon as his baggage had been taken to the public hall, Roebelin got out beads, wire, and Brummagem jewellery. The glimpse of that *Aerides* and the assurance of a purple *Phalenopsis* made him impatient. But even Sam Choon found difficulty in identifying the chiefs, to whom of course presents must be made before business can open. However, the point interesting to Roebelin was settled in an instant. The *Phalenopsis*, they said, abounded within a few hundred yards, and the *Aerides* was common enough. The white man wanted them for medicine? He might have as many as he liked—on due payment. To-morrow the chief would show him, and then a price must be fixed.

He slept in the hall, and at dawn he was more than ready. But early rising is not a virtue of savages. To explore without permission would be dangerous. Gradually the village woke to life. Men descended from their quarters high in air, bathed, made their toilettes, and lounged about, waiting for breakfast. Girls came down for water and returned, whilst their mothers tidied the house. Smoke arose. In due time the men mounted, ate, climbed down, and gathered in the public hall, where Sam Choon was setting out a sample of his wares. Hours passed. But the chief's door remained shut. No one passed out or in.

Roebelin saw people glance upwards with a grave air; but they showed no surprise. He

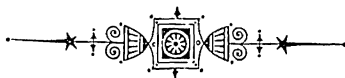
consulted Sam Choon, who had been too busy to notice.

All he said was: 'Spect chief get bad bird! All up this day!' And he stopped his preparations.

So it proved to be. A fowl of black plumage had flown across just as the door was opening. None of the chief's household came down that day. But after negotiation some of the men led Roebelin to see the *Phalenopsis*. They grew in thousands over a brook close by, clinging to small trees. He counted twenty-two plants, bearing more than a hundred flowers open, upon a single trunk. Very curious is one point noticed. The *Phalenopsis* always grows on the northern side of its support, and always turns its flower spike towards the southern side. It is a very bad species to travel. Of the multitude which Roebelin gathered, not more than a hundred reached Europe alive, and every collector since, I believe, has failed utterly. Very few possessed his knowledge and experience.

That was *Phalenopsis Sanderiana*; rather purple than red, but certainly the flower so long sought. With the superb *Aerides*—now called *A. Roebelini*—he was even less successful; it is only to be seen in a very few collections of the highest class.

So the legend ends. But there is a funny little sequel. Sam Choon did well with his 'notions.' After Mr Roebelin's departure, he returned to Davao and opened a promising branch of trade. To secure a permanent footing, he thought it would be judicious to marry a daughter of the chief, and he proposed for the giant beauty whom Roebelin had noticed on landing. The father was astonished and amused, but finally indignant. A Chinaman, however, though thrifty by habit and taste, does not count expense when pleasure or business urge him, and both combined here. The chief wavered, and took counsel of his elders. They also were astonished and indignant; but Sam Choon found means to persuade them. So the young woman received notice that she was to marry the Chinaman next day. Her remarks are not chronicled. But there was much excitement among the bachelors and maidens that evening, and presently a band of stalwart youths entered the hall where Sam Choon sat with the chief—his father-in-law on the morrow. They told the latter gravely that they disapproved of the match. Sam Choon interposed with a statement of the advantages to follow, with equal gravity; then they threatened to smash every bone in his carcass. So the marriage was broken off; but without ill-feeling on either side.



THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A PORTABLE MUSEUM.



NEW aid to education, called the 'Musée Scolaire,' has recently been devised by a publisher of school material in France. The museum consists of a large number of cardboard-mounted charts, to which are affixed, by means of wires, objects of various kinds to illustrate different subjects. Thus, a particular industry or process may be demonstrated throughout by first showing the raw material and concluding with the finished product, the intermediate spaces being filled in by specimens illustrating the various stages of manufacture. It is only a few schools which can have the advantage of being within reach of a good ordinary museum; and even if a school has a collection of its own, it must necessarily be incomplete and of very modest dimensions. The portable museum here briefly described seems to be a step in the right direction; and we shall doubtless find before long that something of the same kind will be available on this side of the Channel.

GLASS-MAKING BY ELECTRICITY.

A French technical journal gives a description of an electric furnace used by Kroll, of Cologne, in the manufacture of glass. Like other electric furnaces, the heat is produced within the crucible by the arc generated between carbon electrodes. Many are the advantages claimed for the new process over the old. First, an economy of 60 per cent. in fuel, and the absence of any risk of coal or cinders spoiling the product; next, the heat required being kept within the containing vessel, it is so localised that the workmen are enabled to approach the mass of molten glass without danger of injury from the heat. It is said also that a mass of 'metal' requiring thirty hours to melt it in the ordinary glass-furnace can, by employing electricity, be reduced to the plastic state in fifteen minutes. Small pots or crucibles made of carbon, containing each from 40 to 50 lb. of raw material, are found to be most convenient in working. Another noteworthy advantage connected with the electric furnace is that work can be stopped or resumed very quickly and without that loss which must attend the firing and banking-up of an ordinary furnace. This means that work on Sundays or at night can be dispensed with.

AIR-RESISTANCE IN RAPID TRAVELLING.

The astonishing feat of the American cyclist who recently rode one mile on a bicycle in less than one minute is interesting from many points of view. The task would, however, have been quite impossible of accomplishment had not the rider ridden behind a wind-shield, which took

the form of a kind of open cupboard, which was fixed behind a locomotive engine on a railway. If the rider had not had this protection from the air it is probable that he would not have covered more than half the distance in the same time. Perhaps our railway companies may now be induced to make some experiments with a view to avoid much of the air-resistance which is such a foe to speed. The flat surface which the end of a locomotive engine offers to the air, as well as the ends of the coaches and every projection upon the vehicles, all tend to stop progress, and it is quite time that an experimental run were made with a sharp-nosed engine and coaches specially designed to cheat the air. What speed should we expect to get out of a steamboat were it built with as little regard to the resistance of the medium in which it moved as one of our railway engines? Some years ago it was stated that engines with boat-shaped prows were to be built, but the notion seems to have sunk into oblivion. It is useless to make so much effort to save coal if energy is wasted by making no provision to contend against air-pressure.

A NEW LIFE-BUOY.

A life-saving apparatus for use at sea, called the 'Franklin,' has now for some time been adopted by the United States Navy; but it is new to this country. It is the invention of Admiral Hichborn; and while it takes the form of the ordinary buoy—that of a hollow ring—it has certain attachments which render it far more serviceable, especially for use at night. When on shipboard the terrible cry 'Man overboard!' is heard, the first thing to be done is to fling after him a buoy, which will support him until a boat can be launched to the rescue. But at night a buoy is of little use unless the drowning man can see it. Luminous paint has been suggested and tried; but the light afforded by a buoy coated with it is far too feeble to be of any practical use. On either side of the 'Franklin' buoy there is a receptacle containing calcium phosphide—a chemical which takes fire on contact with water—so that directly the buoy is thrown overboard its position is marked by two flaring torches. We understand that this apparatus has already been the means of saving many lives, and it is for that reason worthy the attention of shipowners and others.

A BALLOON TRIP TO FRANCE.

Once more has the Channel been crossed by means of a balloon. Starting from the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, at half-past two, the aeronauts, Messrs Spencer and Pollock, safely dropped on French soil at eight o'clock the same evening, and their narrative of the voyage is very interest-

ing. It conclusively shows that an experienced balloonist like Mr Spencer is able to take advantage of aerial strata having different temperatures so as to economise gas; and in this respect the modern aeronaut is far ahead of the pioneers. But in reading the story of the trip one cannot help reflecting, after all, how risky is this business of balloon travelling when once the coast-line is crossed. Happily in the present instance all went well, and this was chiefly due to the meteorological conditions which prevailed at the time; but, according to the aeronaut's own showing, it was at one time a grave question whether the balloon would not drop in the sea. 'Fortunately for us,' Mr Spencer writes, 'our fears were not realised. The loss of the sun's rays did not cause so rapid a drop as we had anticipated. . . . We still cherished every hope of reaching the shore.' But the shore was not reached until nearly every portable thing, including the anchor and its gear, was sacrificed. Once more, to quote Mr Spencer's words, 'desperate situations require drastic measures.'

FOOD PRESERVATIVES.

So many contradictory reports are published as to the harmfulness or harmlessness of various food preservation and colouring compounds that we are glad to see that the question of the fitness or unfitness of such things for the purpose designed is to be set at rest by a committee of inquiry. This committee has been appointed by the President of the Local Government Board, and their instructions are to report 'whether the use of such matters or any of them in certain quantities is injurious to health; and, if so, in what proportion does the use become injurious? They are also to find out, as far as possible, to what extent and in what amount are these substances used at the present time. The names of Professor Thorpe, Dr Bulstrode, and Dr Tunnicliffe, who are to act on this important inquiry, are a guarantee that the matter will be thoroughly and scientifically sifted. Let us hope that the conclusions arrived at will not be docketed and hidden away in a pigeon-hole, as is too often the case with reports from these departmental committees, but will be acted upon without undue delay.

PROFICIENCY IN MUSKETRY.

Of recent years the scoring recorded at the meetings of the National Rifle Association and at various ranges throughout the country has been of a very wonderful nature. To place a bullet on a distant 'bull's-eye' several times in succession, as several of our marksmen can do without difficulty, shows perfection of training both of hand and eye, and is good testimony to the efficiency of our weapons. On a recent occasion Field-Marshal Lord Roberts issued a general order, in which he called attention to the paramount importance of perfection in small-arm fire. He pointed out that courage, sound health, discipline,

power of endurance, and all the other fine qualities which have given the British soldier the victory from the time of Cressy onwards, must under the present conditions of warfare become more or less subservient to rifle-fire at the supreme moment of actual conflict with the enemy. However valiant they may be, perfect in organisation, and rapid of movements, however boldly and intelligently they may have been taught to take up positions, unless they are able to use their rifles with effect, their knowledge and obedience to orders will be of little avail. He stated his belief that the stage is not far off when musketry instruction will be recognised as the *sine quâ non* of infantry soldiers' training, and as very important to cavalry soldiers also.

A LONDON ROOF-GARDEN.

An important addition to one of the new theatres now being built in London is a garden on its roof, covered in with a construction of iron and glass. This new kind of conservatory will be welcomed with delight by the occupants of the theatre, as a pleasant lounge between the acts, and access will be gained to it from the stalls, dress circle, &c., by means of a lift. The idea is a good one, and might, we think, be extended to various other public buildings. The House of Commons has its terrace garden, but very few other buildings have any open-air refuge, and their occupants have no relief from the exhaustion which is inseparable from close confinement and bad ventilation.

INVENTOR OF THE BUNSEN BURNER.

By the death of Professor Robert William Bunsen, of Heidelberg, which took place in that city on the 17th of August, science has lost one of its most successful inquirers and pioneers. He has wrought indefatigably for the last half-century, and to his labours chemistry and physics alike owe some of their most splendid successes. His name first came into prominence in 1846, in connection with his scientific expedition to Iceland, and his investigations into the geyser phenomena there. He was then led to take up the study of arsenic and its compounds, and succeeded in discovering an infallible antidote to the poisonous arsenious acid (iron-oxy-hydrate). He was also the inventor of the 'burner' that bears his name, and the first to make real effective use of the magnesium light. It is, however, in the domain of analytical chemistry that Bunsen's greatest exploits were achieved. Unweariedly he pursued his work over many fields, and his great reward came in 1860 when, in collaboration with Kirchhoff, he made his greatest discovery, that of spectrum analysis, and at the same time pointed out for the first time the existence of two new chemical elements, caesium and rubidium, and succeeded in isolating them. He was also the discoverer of the so-called Galvanic-element, and his researches on the subjects of specific gravity,

the laws of the diffusion and absorption of gases, the influence of pressure on the solidifying-point of substances, made his services to physics only less valuable than those to chemistry proper. His name will take rank in the annals of chemistry alongside those of Volta and Galvani.

RENEWABLE ELECTRIC LAMPS.

Ever since the electric glow-lamp came into use the greatest drawback found in connection with it is its short life, so that frequent renewals are necessary. In a large installation the expense of these renewals is considerable; and before the patents ran out, when lamps cost something like a crown apiece, the item was a very serious one. Moreover, the waste of material was great, for the only part of the lamp which gave way was the hair-like carbon filament within the glass bulb; all the rest of the structure remained intact but useless. A company has recently been formed to exploit a new form of lamp which is capable of renewal when the carbon gives out. It is like the existing glow-lamps, but has a slightly longer neck; and when the carbon fails this neck can be cut, a new filament inserted, the two parts of the glass are once more fused together, and the vacuum renewed at a very trifling cost. The company have in view a house-to-house collection of old lamps, which will be exchanged for new ones, or rather renewed ones, at about sixpence each.

OUR SCHOOLS OF ART.

The national competition of the students at the schools of science and art throughout the country, and the exhibition of a selection of works sent in by them, is now an important annual event at South Kensington. These works seem to cover every department of the arts and manufactures of the country, from their highest expression as found in oil and water-colour paintings, to designs for objects of the most homely description. More than one thousand schools and nearly one hundred thousand students are represented here, and the influence thus exerted upon the artistic tastes of the community cannot be overrated. Half a century ago British manufacturers used to go abroad for the beautiful designs which they can now easily find at home; and presently, perhaps, we shall see foreign manufacturers coming over here to profit by the work of our art schools.

THE ORIGIN OF PEARLS.

The presence of pearls in the shell of a mollusc used to be attributed to congealed drops of dew or rain; and Pliny has left an elaborate account of the manner in which the phenomenon is brought about. Later investigations have, of course, given a more rational explanation for the occurrence of these ocean gems; and the common one is that the nucleus of the pearl is a piece of sand, driftwood, or any foreign body getting within the shell, which the mollusc is unable to

remove, but covers with layers of nacre, in order to reduce the irritation which its continued presence would necessarily cause. But according to a paper recently presented to the Académie des Sciences, Paris, by M. Leon Diquet, there is a distinction between fine pearls and these intrusive bodies coated with nacre. Moreover, he alleges that the latter have not the fine iridescence of the true 'Orient' pearl, but only that of mother-of-pearl. The true pearl, he holds, has no connection with the shell itself, but is a pathological calcification or 'stone,' and seems to arise from parasites. It begins with a small sac of humour, which becomes gelatinous and calcifies in a series of concentric layers, while at its centre may be found a cavity holding organic matter, the remains of the parasites which gave it birth.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

So long as the law of 'a life for a life' is accepted by civilised states the grim question as to the most humane method of putting that law in force is one which is bound to come up for discussion from time to time. In our own country the old method of hanging by the neck has been so far modified as to ensure the instantaneous death of the culprit; and in America the same end is gained by electrical means. In some other states the death penalty is enforced in a far more ghastly manner. It has been reserved for the clever Japanese to suggest another system, which seems to be both effective and at the same time free from the reproach of inhumanity. The condemned person is shut up in a lethal chamber, and by means of powerful pumps the air is rapidly withdrawn from it, and death at once ensues. Experiments on animals point to the conclusion that this method of execution is quite painless. It is obvious that if the principle of the lethal chamber is admitted, there are many methods of making the air within it irrespirable.

PRINTING IN COLOURS.

A new colour-printing machine, the invention of Mr Ivan Orloff, chief engineer of the Government Printing Works at St Petersburg, may now be seen at work at 119 Shaftesbury Avenue, London. This clever machine was originally designed to print multicoloured engine-turned patterns on bank-notes as a precaution against forgery, and thirty-two of them are at present so employed in Russia; but it is now being applied to more artistic purposes. As is well known, most coloured designs can be reproduced by the use of the three colours red, yellow, and blue, the secondary tints being made by the overlapping or admixture of the primaries. In dealing with such a design the Orloff machine employs four electric blocks, which are attached to a cylinder; three of these are for the primary colours, whilst the fourth is a complete electro or master-block representing the full design. The machine is so

arranged that, as the cylinder turns, each block is inked with its respective colour, and each then in turn gives up its impression to a large glue roller. This roller, now charged with all the colours in their right places, is brought against the master-block, which it inks, and the master-block transfers its multicoloured impression to paper. At the time of our visit this machine was printing two intricately-coloured pictures at the rate of one thousand per hour, with wonderful uniformity of result and with perfect registration.

THE IRON INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

At the recent annual meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute a most interesting paper was read by an Indian gentleman holding an official position under the Nizam of Hyderabad, upon the mineral resources of that district. He said that iron ores of the very best kind, chiefly hæmatite and magnetic ores, occur extensively in the Nizam's territories, and from time immemorial cast steel of very superior quality has been manufactured there and transported to Western lands. Indeed, it has been discovered that the raw material of the far-famed Damascus blade was obtained from an obscure village in this part of India. The rules for the admission of arms into Hyderabad were so beset with restrictions that the people were led to depend upon home production for their swords and daggers, and these were of very fine quality. The lecturer urged that British capital might well be employed in reviving the iron industry in the Nizam's dominions; for iron, coal, and the necessary flux were found in large quantities and in close proximity to one another. As to the coal, one seam alone was computed to amount to forty-seven million tons, a supply which might be deemed inexhaustible.

ELECTRIC TRACTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

A special number of *Cassiers' Magazine* for August (33 Bedford Street, Strand, London) is devoted to the latest developments of electric traction. It is profusely illustrated, and gives a great variety of articles which all interested in the subject should see. Although the growth of electric traction in the United Kingdom and Europe generally has been slower than in America, yet this publication enables us to see how many towns have either availed themselves of this power of locomotion or are about to do so. For instance, we learn from the article on 'Electric Tramways in Great Britain' that the London United Tramways Company is to construct about thirteen miles of electric lines in the suburbs of London. The tunnel line of the Central London Railway is six and a half miles in length, with a double track, and thirty-two electric locomotives will be employed. The City and South London Electric Railway was the first underground railway to utilise electricity as a motive-power. It is three miles long, with an equipment of sixteen

locomotives, and has carried over fifty million passengers since last December. The Waterloo and City Railway, opened last year, is a mile and a half long. The only elevated line in this country is the Liverpool Overhead Railway, opened in 1893, which operates six and a half miles of double track, and has forty-four motor-cars. The main advantage of the underground conduit system, as compared with the overhead trolley, is the prevention of electrolysis and injury to gas and water pipes. It is more costly than the overhead system, but does not detract from the appearance of the streets. Another method of traction still to be tested is Kingsland's mechanical surface contact system, by means of metal studs placed on the track between the two tram lines. Up to the autumn of 1898 there were in this country one hundred and fifty miles of track electrically operated, with five hundred motor-cars. When the Dublin Central power-station is completed it will operate three hundred cars. At present fifty are in operation and one hundred and fifty under construction. Details are given of the systems adopted, amongst other places, by Middlesborough, Douglas (Isle of Man), Norwich, Kidderminster, Blackpool, Leeds, Dover, Halifax, Bradford, Cork, and Guernsey. Coming to Scotland, we find that Glasgow has made an experiment on the Springburn route, while Edinburgh has adopted the cable system, which is only now being tardily completed. A statement by Mr Pearson, of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, New York, as to cables is not very encouraging. He says that the system, having for some time posed as unimprovable, is now on the decline. He considers that the cable has been superseded, and 'that no more cable roads for city traction will be built, and that those now in use will eventually be operated by some other power.'

THE THREE VOICES.

THERE are three voices born of Heaven's blue :

The first to all men sounds at Morning's break ;
It rings a trumpet-blast the whole world through,
When God says 'Wake !'

The second comes when Noonday's sun is high ;

A voice commanding and imperative,
Bidding men strive and pray unceasingly,
When God says 'Live !'

The third, when Evening follows in the shade

Of manhood's dying day, sounds last and best
To those who woke, and lived, and worked, and prayed,
When God says 'Rest !'

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



TREGAVIS THE CHEMIST.

By JAMES PATEY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IT was a wet Saturday night. Since three o'clock in the afternoon there had been a continuous downpour, and the gutters of the cobbled streets of Langissack ran like rivulets.

The marketing was over, and the throng of miners and fisher-folk that made a weekly stir of shopping in our little town had dispersed to their homes. The shops were all closed but the chemist's, whose mighty bottles of amber and ruby and emerald still glowed in the dreariness, throwing a glamour upon the very puddles, and mitigating the misery of the night. Within the shop, the last customer stood at the counter—an old man, with a strip of sailcloth across his shoulders to protect him from the worst of the weather.

'That will be tenpence, altogether,' said the chemist, scrupulously sealing the package. 'It must be rubbed well in; the rubbing will do as much good as the embrocation.'

To which the old fellow replied, 'Ted'n for me; 'tes for Simeon. Bless thy sawl! I nivver use no druggist's trade. Whenever my leg troubleth me, I rin awver to Farrier Tregooze for a dab o' sheep's ointment, an' it doeth wonders.'

When the man had gone the chemist yawned and looked wearily at the clock. It seemed a waste of effulgence to keep open longer.

Tregavis the chemist was a tall, lank, loose-limbed man, with thin hair and whiskers of a lightish colour, and pale-blue eyes behind his spectacles; he had a slight stoop at the shoulders, and minuteness of measuring had given him a peering habit.

Going to the desk at the corner of the counter, he said to his assistant, 'I wish that coastguard would come for his mixture, Vanstone; we might then close.'

'He came in some time ago, sir,' replied Vanstone, looking at his master in some astonishment.

'I mean the man from Polveen who left the prescription and was to return for the medicine. It's time he came.'

The assistant turned scarlet. 'He was here three-quarters of an hour ago, sir. He said he was in a hurry to be off, as the wind was rising, and he was going home by boat. I let him have the mixture.'

'Then what is this?' cried the chemist, aghast, taking a paper-wrapped bottle from the desk.

'Cap'n Gerran's medicine, sir.'

'My God, Vanstone! what have you done? You have given the man the wrong bottle!'

Captain Gerran was suffering from an incurable malady, and at seasons was driven to a strong narcotic to alleviate his agony; and this was the draught that Richard Curtis, the Polveen coastguard, was carrying home to his sick child! It was a fearful mistake—Life and Death lay bottled side by side on the chemist's desk; and Death, swift and terrible, was now in the pocket of the coastguard, who had braved the weather for the sake of his little maid, and was by this time sailing homeward.

Vanstone might have pleaded that the scrawled 'Capt. Gerran' in his master's handwriting was passably like 'Coast Guard;' but it was no moment for excuse or justification.

In the desperate hope that the man might not have left the town, Tregavis snatched the bottle and rushed hatless out of the shop and down the steep street towards the shore. The quay was deserted—there was no boat at the steps, and no sign of a boat's light upon the dark water. The rain fell in torrents, and there was a thickness over the sea.

A man with a lantern was removing tackle from one of the fishing-boats drawn up on the beach.

'Hulloa!' shouted Tregavis.

'Hulloa!' answered the fisherman.

'Can you tell me whether the Polveen coast-guard has gone home?'

'Iss; he left half-an-hour ago. I had a word with 'en. His little maid's bad, and he's cruel troubled about her; but he's got a bottle o' stuff that'll putt the cheeld right. I reckon he'll find it purty rough round the Point.'

With a thumping heart Tregavis retraced his steps, running uphill all the way to the 'Plume of Feathers.' The only hope to avert a tragedy was to overtake the coastguard, or to follow him close enough to prevent the administering of the draught. The distance from Langissack to Polveen by road is twenty miles, owing to the indentation of the coast; but across the estuary and around Penzele Head it is but five or six miles by sea. An out-of-the-way, inaccessible little village is Polveen, and there is no telegraph.

There was revelry at the 'Plume of Feathers,' and Johnny Roscorla was singing. Johnny was famous as a vocalist beyond the limits of the parish, and some of us thought that with a little training he might have 'travelled.' His voice was a strong tenor, clear and manly, with something of the ring of a trumpet in it; and he had the knack of lending a touch of sentiment or redeeming humour to the dreariest of ditties.

There was considerable emulation among the various little sects of Langissack for the possession of Roscorla, for such a voice as his would be an acquisition to any congregation. Zion yearned for Johnny, and Ebenezer was equally anxious for his in-gathering. But our *tenore robusto* had no sectarian predilections, and, with a fine impartiality, sang for everybody, his services being generally in demand at anniversaries; he even volunteered for the harmonium fund of the Primitives of the next parish, on which occasion he gave 'The Armour Bearer' so valiantly that the Primitives lost all prudence, and the collection was heroic.

Alas! Johnny's efforts were as much appreciated at the tavern as in the chapel, and the recognition of his talent took the too-frequent form of the gratuitous replenishing of his glass. The elders of Langissack began to shake their heads over Johnny. He was too often loafing about the town when other men were fishing; and it was prophesied that his singing would be the 'ruin of 'en.' But old Siah Hosken, our rubicund Silenus, said, 'Nay, let 'en sing while the music's in 'en, for the voice of 'en mellows the cider.' So Johnny pursued his melodious path to perdition.

Clear on the night from the crowded parlour of the 'Feathers' came the singing of Roscorla:

'They drank their king,
An' they drank their queen,
An' they drank their constitootion;'

and presently, in full blast, the chorus of the old sea-song:

'The wind that blows,
The ship that goes,'

leaving Johnny to give the requisite tenderness to the culminating sentiment:

'And the lass that loves a sailor.'

Into the midst of the revellers sprang Tregavis the chemist, panting, bare-headed, dripping with wet—a somewhat ludicrous figure.

'I want a boatman for Polveen!' he cried in agitation.

The men stared in astonishment, and one said, 'You'm too late, sir. I reckon our work's done for wan week. 'Tis blawing a brave bit outside, an' nobody but a fool wed stir to say.'

'The Polveen coastguard has gone home with the wrong medicine,' gasped Tregavis, 'and I must overtake him!'

A simultaneous grin overspread the faces of the fishermen, and old Siah Hosken said, 'Don't 'ee trouble yourself, maister. If 'tis the wrong stuff I reckon 'twill do 'en all the same good—p'r'aps more; for 'twas a mistake that cured Granfer Pengelly. He swallowed the liniment by the spoonful every four hours, an' anointed his back with the physic, an' in wan week he was a-larrupin' the constable.'

There was a burst of laughter, and the levity maddened the chemist.

'I must have a boat,' he cried fiercely. 'A mistake has been made—a terrible mistake—the man is taking home the wrong medicine to his child, and one dose will inevitably kill her. Isn't one of you man enough to go?'

A solemnity fell upon the men, and Johnny Roscorla said instantly, 'I'll go, sir!' and, reaching his cap, he strode out with Tregavis.

'Take the *Gilliflower*, Johnny,' cried Reuben Cardennick, following him; 'she's a safe boat, and purty swift.'

The others, desirous of lending a hand in getting the boat down, trooped out of the inn and clattered down the street. Old Bolitho the landlord, unaware of the trouble, coming into the parlour, was astonished to find an array of deserted mugs and glasses.

Cardennick looked anxiously over the water. 'Tis a dirty night, Johnny; an' 'twill be terrible rough round Penzele.'

Siah Hosken said, 'Tis a mazed job; better send Farrier Tregooze to Polveen a-horseback, an' trust to Providence.'

But Roscorla answered simply, 'The time's too precious. Bless my sawl! we can't let the cheeld perish. If 'tis to be done, I'll do it.'

When Johnny Roscorla is arraigned for his manifold iniquities, let this night be remembered for him.

As the chemist hurried down the beach, Roscorla said, 'You bide here, Mr Tregavis; you'm no mortal use in the boat, an' I'll give the bottle to the man right enough.'

But Tregavis was not the man to depute a risky duty. 'You're a good fellow, Johnny,' said

he, 'but I must go.' He looked a pitiable object in the lantern-light—his partially-bald head bare to the rain, his black coat saturated, and a distracted look in his pale face.

The *Gilliflower* was carried down by as many eager fellows as could lay hands upon the gunwale.

'Look 'ee here, sir,' argued Johnny. 'S'pose any poor sawl's took bad in the night, who's to physic 'em? 'Twill be said that the chemist's out a-pleasure-sailin' round Penzele wi' Johnny Roscorla. Dooty's dooty, sir; an' my place is in the boat, an' yours is 'long with the gallipots.'

The chemist leapt into the boat, and Johnny followed. As they pushed off one man flung a bucket aboard, and shouted, 'When you'm rounding the Point I reckon you'll have more ballast than is good for 'ee.'

In spite of the weather the night was not very dark—there was a moon somewhere in the dismal sky, according to the calendar. The rain fell in floods, but the group of fishermen stood on the quay and watched the bobbing light of the *Gilliflower* till it grew dim and disappeared.

For the first mile the wind was with them, and they were soon clear of the bay and feeling the wash of the Channel. Straight ahead blazed the light on the promontory of Penzele. Tregavis was consumed with impatience, and the minutes seemed hours. With morbid persistency his imagination pictured with every grim detail the tragic sequel of the night's blunder. Once he took the oars, and attempted to row in the broken water—an attempt that would have been ludicrous enough under other circumstances. If Roscorla had taken a longer tack he might have kept the boat drier, but soon the water was breaking over the bow. The chemist seized the bucket and baled desperately—it suited his mood better than the agony of inaction. The rain slackened, and the weather grew thicker; instead of the pelting downpour there was a driving drizzle. At times the light on Penzele waned to a glimmer and disappeared for several minutes.

'Tis an ugly night,' cried Johnny; 'thickish in streaks.' And he grew anxious as he stared into the vagueness.

Then Tregavis prayed—prayed with a vehemence that was terrifying to Johnny Roscorla. The man called aloud to the Almighty in an anguish of entreaty. 'I tell 'ee 'twas whisht, an' I was mortal skeered,' said Johnny when he afterwards told the story of the night's adventure; 'for the supplication of 'en was terrible to hearken to.'

An impenetrable mist surrounded them, and they could no longer make out the light on Penzele. The boat was at the mercy of wind and current, and the fisherman lost all idea of his course in the darkness.

'The Lord help us!' cried Johnny fervently, 'for I'm no better to 'ee than a blind man.' He made to lower the sail. 'Twill clear again soon,' said he, 'an' 'tis no good to rin scat into Penzele.'

But Tregavis shouted, 'Are you afraid, man? Let her run.'

'Right, sir!' answered Johnny as cheerily as he could; 'I'll steer by faith, as the hymn saith—'tis fitty doctrine, but poor saymanship.'

So they drove blindly on into the thickness. Presently on their ears comes a dull, throbbing sound—the slow pulse of a steamer feeling her way at quarter-speed. The two men could see no lights, and could only vaguely tell the direction of the approaching vessel.

'She'll nivver see us!' cried Roscorla; and with straining eyes he peered into the darkness, knowing that life or death might hang on a turn of the tiller.

Nearer and nearer came the rhythmic throb, till they could almost feel the imminence of the panting monster. Both men shouted at the top of their voices, and out of the obscurity loomed a black wall that bore down upon them with the hideous blare of a siren.

There was no cleaving, smashing impact; but the fishing-boat was struck violently enough at the bow, and its occupants found themselves in the water; and the next moment the half-filled boat was caught in a huff of wind and capsized. So the *Gilliflower*, with its set sail submerged, drifted bottom-up upon the rocks at Penzele, where it suffered the buffeting of three tides, and was eventually flung ashore on Polveen beach, stave by stave.

THE DECLINE OF OATMEAL PORRIDGE.



HERE seems to be a general consensus of opinion among those who are in a position to know the facts of the matter that the 'hale-some parritch' is going out of use. It is very sincerely to be regretted.

Science and popular experience agree in pronouncing it one of the most nutritious of foods, and one of the cheapest too. The fact that it is very cheap is indeed probably the chief reason for the decline in its consumption. Because it is

cheap it has been accounted the poor man's food, as it really has been very extensively in the past. Everybody knows that all over Scotland especially it used to be the chief article of diet with the working-classes. But people will not eat 'poor men's food' if they can help it; and of late years the working-classes have been prospering. Work has been abundant and wages good, and unfortunately large numbers of them have spent their entire earnings on the more highly-appreciated though often far less nutritious and

more expensive knick-knacks of the middle-class meal-table.

When Carlyle saw Lord Macaulay he said, 'Ay, any one can see that thy face is made out of Scotch oatmeal.' It seems quite likely that one hundred years ago, when the range of articles of diet was more limited, oatmeal was overdone in Scotland, as it now seems underdone. Dr William Alexander, in his *Rural Life in the North*, quotes an old interrogatory, which shows that this diet was partaken of in one form or another by some poor folks three times a day. 'Have you got your *pottage*?' (breakfast); 'Have you got your *sowens*?' (dinner); 'Have you got your *brose*?' (supper). These were all different preparations of oatmeal. Hugh Miller, in his *Schools and Schoolmasters*, relates his experiences, more than seventy years ago, when it became his turn to cook for a squad of masons, to make oatcakes and boil porridge. He spoilt a meal or two, he says, 'ere my porridge became palatable, or my cakes crisp, or my brose free and knotty, or my brochan sufficiently smooth and void of knots.' In his method of making porridge at the barrack the cook continued stirring the mess and adding meal until from its first wild ebullitions it became silent over the fire. Miller managed to make porridge like leaven, quite after this manner. Once he made a dough-like mass partly the colour of chocolate. The rest was burnt brown at the bottom of the pot. His master, when ladling out the stuff, said: 'Od, laddie, what ca' ye this? Ca' ye this *brochan*?' 'Anything ye like,' he replied; 'but there are two kinds in the pot, and it will go hard if none of them please you.' No wonder the master was angry as he discussed what seemed a hard brown dumpling.

Dr J. McGrigor Robertson, author of *The Household Physician*, in one of the Edinburgh 'Health Lectures' on *Food and Drink*, gives a table showing how much a penny can buy; from which it appears that we can get for that sum twenty times the amount of nutritive material in the shape of oatmeal that we can in the shape of lean beef. He states the matter in another way, by giving two breakfasts, in the first of which oatmeal appears, costing half the money of the other, yet with 'pre-eminence in nutritive quality which ham and egg cannot hope to rival,' as given in the second: (I.) Six ounces oatmeal made into porridge, ten ounces sweet milk, one pint cocoa, quarter-lb. bread, half-ounce butter—yields 120 grains nitrogen, 2145 grains carbon. Cost, 3d. (II.) One pint coffee, one egg, quarter-lb. bacon, half-lb. bread, one ounce butter—yields 80 grains nitrogen, 1792 grains carbon. Cost, 5½d.

Dr Frankland has also said that the same amount of work may be obtained from oatmeal costing 3½d. as from butcher-meat costing 3s. 6½d. Mr T. Brassey, the great railway contractor, who had uncommon opportunities for observing the working power of men of different nationalities,

has left it on record that 'the best navvies are teetotalers. That, where three hundred of them had to widen a gauge, and had to effect the change quickly, working day and night, it was found that oatmeal gruel was the best for keeping up their energies.'

'Twenty years ago, or within a much smaller period in some parts,' writes Mr William Inglis, of Bonnington, Leith, 'oatmeal was the staple article of diet amongst a large percentage of the working population of Scotland, just as rice is in India or China and the East generally. Amongst the rural population, labourers, and the majority living in country villages, oatmeal was always used once a day, often twice—morning and evening. Farm hands were generally, till within some ten or twelve years ago, paid not altogether in money, but had so much in cash and the balance in oatmeal and potatoes.'

That is what in England was known as the 'truck system,' and has been made illegal. It is a bad system wherever it prevails, and in itself would be almost enough to bring about a revolt against the food as soon as the people found it possible. It is satisfactory that it has to a very great extent disappeared in Scotland. Where oatmeal is still given as wages it is frequently exchanged for tea and other provisions, and farmers are everywhere complaining of late that their workers have tea carried out to the fields instead of porridge, as they used to have.

Nor is this food so much used in town as formerly. The poorest class of workers have for the most part given it up, though it is still frequently used by the more intelligent of skilled artisans, who do not take it because it is cheap, but because they like it, and because they believe in its wholesome and nourishing qualities. The falling off in the consumption, it seems pretty evident, is mainly among the poorest and least intelligent section of the community; while there are good reasons for believing that the consumption is decidedly on the increase among those who are better off. The very poor man who eats porridge because it is cheap envies the better-paid workman who can indulge in bacon and eggs, rump-steaks, or fish and fowl; and, as soon as earnings permit of it, he gives up his porridge and pushes on towards what he considers these higher dietary levels, even though he can get only as far as a modest sausage or some indigestible tinned abomination. But among people who are able to eat what they please, and whose choice is determined only by what they consider most wholesome—the better-paid class of artisans and middle and upper class households generally—the consumption of oatmeal is on the increase. The greater intelligence on all matters of health has during the past few years led towards greater simplicity of diet; and many people both in Scotland and in England are now taking from intelligent and deliberate choice the food which

formerly among a large section of the population was eaten from prevailing custom or because it was cheap. Porridge is to be found now as a regular item in the bills of fare at all good English hotels, though in many of them the cooks have not yet learned how to prepare it properly.

Some of the Scotch dealers in the article have another way of accounting for the falling off in consumption. They say that oatmeal is not nowadays what it used to be. The real thing is still to be got by a little care and by paying a proper price; but the keen competition for business and the continual cutting down of prices has led to the 'adulteration' of the genuine article. Between real Scotch oatmeal and the imported American or Canadian article, say the Scotch millers, there is as much difference as between diamond and glass. British traders buy this cheap American stuff and 'adulterate' the Scotch with it; and the consequence is that people who used to get really good porridge would rather give it up altogether than eat what they get now. This explanation is given for what it is worth; and though perhaps Americans and Canadians might not altogether fall in with it, if it is a fact that from increasing competition large quantities of inferior oatmeal are now brought into the market, it would no doubt partly account for the falling off of consumption among the poor, who would of course be the purchasers of the cheapest qualities, and it would not be inconsistent with the increase among those who can buy the best article.

It is a thousand pities that from any cause whatever there should be any tendency to give up this cheap and excellent food in favour of articles that cost twice as much, and are frequently not half as good. Dr Johnson's well-known dictionary definition of 'oats'—'A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people'—was merely a little splutter of the Doctor's pettiness and prejudice. 'Why,' he said to Boswell, 'I own that by my definition of oats I meant to vex them.' Lord Elibank's rejoinder, when it was repeated to him, however, was crushing: 'And whaur'll you find sic horses and sic men?' English horses and Scotchmen have in the past undoubtedly afforded unquestionable evidence of the value of oats for the building up of frames and the development of muscle, and science has unmistakably shown that that is just what might have been expected from the food.

Professor Norton, of Yale University, some years ago made a thorough analytical examination of the oat-plant in all its stages of growth. He was a very competent chemist, and the results he arrived at have in the main been pretty much what other authorities have come to since. After an interesting account of the manner in which silica is appropriated by the plant in the structure of stalk and leaf and husk, the professor continued: 'Equally

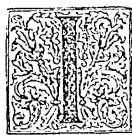
beautiful are the facts which we discover respecting the alkaline sulphates and phosphates. We find little of the latter in the whole length of the straw, in the leaf, or in the chaff. But when we arrive at the grain, the alkaline sulphates disappear, and the phosphates take their places; these have passed up the whole length of the stalk, avoiding the leaves and the chaff, and at last, by a law infinitely more unerring than any which human wisdom could devise, deposited themselves in the very place where phosphoric acid is most needed, in order that, as part of the food, it may build up the bones, the framework of the animal body. . . . We see, then,' concludes the professor, 'that even including the husk, the oat is superior to almost any other corn in those ingredients which go to the production of muscle in the body. The strong, muscular forms of Scottish ploughmen have long been living witnesses to the good properties of their favourite and almost only food.' Professor Norton found that, taking a low average, the oat yields about four per cent. more of the ingredients necessary for bone and muscle making than the best wheat. Fine horses in England and fine men in Scotland are thus just about what you might expect, on scientific grounds, to find.

It is certainly unfortunate that a food that has proved its capability of building up so stalwart a race of men as the agriculturists of Scotland should be losing its popularity. Perhaps, when it comes to be known how extensively it is being adopted by the comparatively wealthy there will be a reaction in its favour. Whatever may be said about imported meal, there can be no doubt Scotch oatmeal or rolled oats cannot be beaten; and, if properly cooked, is as delicious as it is wholesome. Scotch porridge is made as follows: To one pint of water when boiling add three tablespoonfuls of oatmeal, shaken slowly through the fingers or a sieve, and stirred continuously; add a little salt, and boil thirty minutes. Connoisseurs in the matter hold that the cooking ought to be done in a double saucepan, so that the inner vessel containing the oatmeal should come in contact, not with the dry scorching heat of the fire, but with boiling water.

The writer of this, though not a Scotchman, has for many years taken porridge for breakfast, though he has been accustomed to do what probably no Scotchman would do—that is to say, he has always taken stewed fruit with it. The Scot usually takes his 'parritch' with milk—rarely with cream, as a luxury; and, when milk is not available, with treacle, treacle-beer, or the like; but, with these, porridge is apt to get a trifle monotonous. A plate of well-cooked porridge with rhubarb, gooseberries, cherries, plums, damsons, apples, or pears, with milk and sugar, afford a seasonable variety; always cheap, always delicious, and always wholesome.

A NEW NOAH.*

By FRED WHISHAW.



‘**I** WAS already married when the following events happened,’ said Holdsworth, who narrated this tale at our camp-fire; ‘and we were living on a little estate in Florida, growing oranges. The estate and all my orange-trees are for sale, cheap, if any of you want to buy the lot; perhaps you’ll make ’em pay—I couldn’t! But that’s not in the story.’

‘Well, my house was a kind of shanty, built on the banks of a small river, the Rippler, an innocent-looking, smug kind of a stream that you’d never imagine capable of any sort of mischief; for it was but thirty yards wide, or so, and sluiced along with a harmless kind of a medium current, just as if it were far too busy trying to get safely down to the sea to have time for any fooling around. It had the appearance of sticking strictly to business, and would be the last river, one would think, to waste time in spreading its waters over the surrounding country in floods, and such-like foolery, when it ought to be hurrying away towards the Mexican Gulf. Yet this was just another instance of the truth of that wise saying that “One never knows.”’

‘One never does know anything worth knowing—at least, not much. If one could only be certain, now, when there would be a flood, or a tornado, or a drought, or a deluge, or a war, or any other first-class upsetter of the usual, if I may coin a term, what a lot of money one might make by buying for a rise beforehand!’

‘Well, we had a very rainy season one year early in the fall, and our innocent-looking little Rippler began to flow faster, and gradually to widen; and this continuing for a few days caused my wife and me to look somewhat grave, though we didn’t as yet anticipate anything like what eventually occurred.’

‘Our nearest neighbours were a young fellow and his wife, Europeans like ourselves, who had no more intimate acquaintance with our river and its ways than we. My wife, Bridget, had been very kind to these good folks at the time of their little one’s birth, about a month ago, and they—the Sinclairs—had become pretty intimate with us since, and considerably devoted to Bridget by reason of her kindness at a critical period.’

‘Well, one day the water began to rise very rapidly—so much more rapidly than it had done hitherto that I began to be seriously alarmed for our house and furniture; for the lip of the

stream now lay but a foot or two clear of the front door, and the water still rising.

“Bridget,” I said, “I don’t quite like it. I think we’ll move the furniture and things upstairs.”

‘Our shanty was quite a mansion in comparison with most of the dwellings—one-storied buildings for the greater part—in the neighbourhood, for we possessed two stories, the fact being that my partner Harris and I lived under the same roof, he inhabiting the upper and Bridget and I the lower story. Unfortunately, however, Harris was up north, at New York, on business, and when I began, with Bridget’s assistance, to work at the removal of our household gods, I found that without the help of another man we could not do much.’

‘I decided to run over to Sinclair’s, therefore, and beg him to come down first thing in the morning and lend me a hand. Sinclair’s home stood considerably higher up the river than ours, and I anticipated no danger for him, for his house was built on rising ground some fifty yards back from the stream.’

‘My good neighbour heartily acquiesced in my request for his assistance, and promised to come over at daylight.’

‘Sinclair proved as good as his word, and early enough next morning he appeared, having come on foot, leaving the horse at home. Sinclair was richer than I by this horse, which he used for farm-work: I could not afford such a luxury at that time. He had left the horse for his wife, in case, as he laughingly observed, the floods should come up so quickly during his absence that it might be necessary for her to escape with the baby up-country.’

‘The water, when Sinclair arrived, was standing several inches deep in our rooms, and it was raining cats and dogs. We had all our nice furniture there, mind you—a piano, and several other heavy things; for, though we were poor enough, our respective fathers and friends had set us up handsomely at our wedding, and everything was good and new. Besides all this, there was the season’s produce in apples and potatoes, and so on, in the barn; no oranges as yet from our young trees—and all this had to be removed into safety. Poor old Harris would have had a fit if he had seen his cosy sitting-room crammed with our furniture and a few score sacks of potatoes and things, all piled cheek by jowl with and upon one another and mixed with his things.’

‘With Sinclair’s help the work of carrying and removing went on quickly enough, and we had just about finished, at eleven in the morning, when an

* It may interest the reader to know that in its main incident this story is the narrative of an actual occurrence.—F. W.

astonishing thing happened. There was a clattering and a splashing along the road that led by the river behind our house and past Sinclair's towards Manorville (a little township ten miles away), and to our great surprise up rode Mrs Sinclair, pale and very agitated, and obviously frightened.

"Oh Jack," she cried, sitting still upon her panting horse, which was wet up to his body through galloping in the water, for it now reached in the road as high as his knees—"Jack, I've come to warn you you must return home at once; there's a man been in from Manorville who says the lake up at Johnstontown is likely to overflow, and if it does our river will go up six feet or more, and probably whirl everything away, as it did in 'fifty-eight,' he says. There'll be a boat down from Manorville at one o'clock to take us off, and you, too, Mrs Holdsworth—and—and I'm afraid we shall both lose our houses and most of our property as well."

"This was very wretched news. Poor Mrs Sinclair was almost in hysterics as she finished her tale; but she would not consent to dismount and enter the house in order to be refreshed and comforted; there was no time, she sobbed, and she must get back to baby.

"Good heavens, Mary! what have you done with the child?" asked Sinclair, suddenly recalling the fact that his wife had not brought baby with her. "You've never left it alone?"

"Oh, baby is quite safe," Mrs Sinclair replied, smiling through her tears. "The water is not nearly up to the floor-level yet, and baby's bassinette is on the table in the sitting-room; even the six-foot rise of the water would not reach her."

"Well, what's to be done?" I asked, my heart feeling pretty heavy, for I felt that our house was doomed supposing the Johnston Lake should burst, as Mrs Sinclair said.

"I'm afraid you'll have to leave your shanty to take care of itself, old man," said Sinclair, "and come up our way; our house, standing, as it does, so much higher, will be safer than this."

"Maybe ours will stand," I mused; "it's pretty firmly built into its foundations."

"Well, it will stand or fall whether you are by or not," said Sinclair. "Come back with us, man; we must hope for the best and do the wisest!"

"Bridget can ride with me," added Mrs Sinclair, "and Jack and you won't mind wading. Bring any papers or valuables in case of accidents."

"This was obviously the only sensible course open to us. I went upstairs and collected my papers, money, and valuables, and I was still searching about for my wife's little stock of jewellery when I heard a shout from Sinclair, who stood and talked with the ladies outside, the group being just as I had left them.

"Quick, Mary—dismount! Jump into my arms!" I heard Jack Sinclair shout.

"I rushed downstairs—I think I took the whole flight at a bound—and was just in time to see a remarkable sight.

"Mrs Sinclair, in the foreground, was in the act of scrambling from her horse's back—assisted by my wife—into the arms of her husband. In the background, coming tearing round the corner of land which made a bend of the river a hundred yards above our house, there rushed towards us a seething, roaring wave, several feet in height, carrying trees and refuse, and bringing along with it, as it seemed, a storm of wind and rain.

"Back—into the house and upstairs!" cried Sinclair, hustling the ladies in at the door. "Don't waste a second. Come, Holdsworth! God grant your shanty is as strong as you think!"

"We were all in the top room and at the window in less than half a minute, and just in time to see a grand and terrible spectacle. With a hissing, roaring sound the scudding wave reached the house. The water flooded and leaped up the sides, washing, at its first striking, a foot or two higher than its real depth, and actually splashing in at the upper windows. Trees and broken timber and piles of straw went swirling and whizzing past us, breaking the glass of the windows and catching in the frames. Sinclair's horse was washed away in an instant and disappeared; everything seemed to be turning round. I grew giddy and dazed. Were we afloat and travelling with the flood, or had the house stood the shock?

"It had withstood it, fortunately; Harris and I had cause for self-congratulation on that score, for we built the thing ourselves. I was not long in discovering the fact that we were stationary, and in my joy and relief I shouted suddenly, "Hooray! we are safe; the old place has stood it. So must yours have done, Sinclair," I added, "for it hasn't floated past us. What's the matter with your wife?" I concluded. "Look at her!"

"My good Bridget was busy attending to her already, having discerned her need while Sinclair and I were still at the window.

"She has fainted," said Bridget. "She was thinking of the baby."

"Good heavens, yes—the baby!" I muttered; "but it will be all right, Sinclair, for the house has held together, and will hold, and the child is high out of danger."

"God grant it," he said hoarsely. "I don't know; the water has come up eight feet if it has come up an inch!" Sinclair suddenly went down on his knees. "God—in mercy save our child," he groaned.

"We comforted him as best we could, and Mary too, when she came round; but it was clear that they had little hope, and that they were both, for the time being, nearly heartbroken. To tell the truth, in my secret heart I had

not much hope for the child either. Undoubtedly the water would be standing deep in their sitting-room; the poor creature, in all human probability, was drowned already! In any case she must starve, for how could she possibly be saved until the flood went down? It was utterly impossible to dream of getting back to the poor, doomed little mortal.

'For two hours we sat and stood and shivered at the windows, watching the water that rushed by but a couple of feet below us. We spoke little. The Sinclairs sat close to one another, and, I think, were mostly engaged in praying. Bridget fetched food and a bottle of wine, but they would neither eat nor drink.

'Suddenly Jack said, "The water's a little lower!"

'I looked out. He was right; it had receded by nearly a foot from the high-water mark.

"It will go down, I dare say," said I bracingly, "nearly as quickly as it rose."

'Sinclair shook his head, glancing at his wife, who sat quietly weeping. I knew what he meant; he would have said, if he had spoken, "Too late."

'Half-an-hour more of waiting and watching, and then another excitement came. Floating rapidly on the bosom of the flood came a large boat, half-full of people.

"Here come the rescuers!" I said. "Courage, Mrs Sinclair; now we shall hear news of the—of your house."

'The boat came rapidly bearing down upon us. Those on board shouted cheerily as they approached, bidding us catch the ropes they intended to throw, and to climb out of the window as quickly as we could, once they were alongside. In another minute we were all aboard. I spoke to the man who seemed to be in command.

"Did you stop at Sinclair's place?" I asked him.

"No; we shouted, and found they had left already. I guessed they had come down your way," he replied.

"Was the water up to their windows?" I continued under my breath, for I could see the Sinclairs watching and listening. The man replied aloud, ignorant that he stabbed two fellow-creatures to the very heart:

"Up to them," he laughed. "Well, just about; there's six or seven feet of water in their parlour if there's an inch! They'd have had to sit on the roof till we came along."

'It was all over with hope then. Poor Mary Sinclair hid her face and sobbed aloud; her husband was not much better.

"What is it?" asked the skipper.

"The baby," I muttered, "left alone in the room."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated the horrified fellow, "then I'm afraid—— But, Lord knows. Cheer up, missus; Mr Holdsworth's is the last party we've to take up; we'll turn her round now

at once, and head up-stream. The flood's giving fast; in a couple of hours we may reach your house if we work hard—it is but a mile and a half. Pull her round, bow side; we'll take her into the shallows and work up-stream for all we're worth."

'Poor Mrs Sinclair glanced gratefully at the speaker, but shook her head. During the hard struggle up-stream towards their house she sat holding my wife's hand, and for all I could hear I don't think either of them spoke a word, though I don't doubt there was some hand-pressing done. Trust women to find a lot of consolation in holding one another by the hand; it "completes the circle" of sympathy, I suppose, and lets the electric current pass freely between them.

'The four fellows at the oars, with help from Sinclair and myself—it seemed to do Jack good to have something to do—sent the big boat travelling steadily though slowly along against the still powerful current; and in little more than an hour we were nearly abreast of Sinclair's shanty.

'I saw from some distance away that it was all up; high-water mark was visible enough, and it was nearly up at the top of the windows. Sinclair saw it too, and his hand stole to his wife's.

"Courage, old woman," I heard him say; "we've got to face the worst. See where the water reached."

'Poor Mary Sinclair looked up at the house with a white, set face, but said nothing. The water was much lower now, but the boat could still float right up to the building. Mrs Sinclair prepared to get out and climb in at the window.

"Don't let her go in, Sinclair," I whispered, nudging him; "let her wait till she's calmer. Go in first yourself, and prepare things a bit for her; or, better still, let Bridget and me go in first; you can enter at the kitchen window and wait there a while"——

"No; she will insist upon going, poor soul," sighed Jack, with a kind of sob in his throat. "God help her!"

'But as we drew up close to the house, and Mary stood up to step out on the window-sill, an extraordinary thing happened. With perfect distinctness the sound of a baby's cry from within the house broke the sympathetic silence that prevailed without. It was the weirdest, ghostliest thing, under existing circumstances.

"Gracious Heaven! what's that?" exclaimed Sinclair, starting. "The child can't possibly be"——

"She can—she can—she *is*!" cried Mrs Sinclair. "Oh, don't I know her cry in a thousand? She's alive, our darling! Oh Jack! a miracle has happened."

'It was partly true; the child was alive, but there had been no miraculous intervention in its favour. The explanation was simple indeed; and

when old Jack Sinclair came to the window, and made over the facts to us who remained in the boat, the cheer that went up might have been heard in California.

"The bassinette was on the table, boys," said the happy, radiant father; "and when the water rose in the room the table simply floated, and the cradle lay on the top with the little beggar

fast asleep inside—and there you are! We'd call the kid Noah after this if Noah wasn't a man's name; but she's a girl, you see!"

"Call her 'Noa' without the 'h'!" roared some delighted fellow from the boat, concluded Holdsworth; "and hang me if they didn't do it! The child was christened 'Noa' a fortnight afterwards, and Noa she is to this day!"

BANKING ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS.



IS well known, many notes of the Bank of England have had singular histories attached to them, some of which have already been told in these pages. Two notes of one hundred pounds each, dated in 1696 (the bank only opened for business on 1st January 1695), were presented at the Bank for payment in 1764—that is, sixty-eight years later. These notes were discovered in an old Family Bible, where it was supposed they had been placed for safe keeping, and had lain ever since. As they are among the curios shown at the Bank, a quaint description of them may be given from the *Scots Magazine* of the period: 'They are as large as an Indian bond, and the figure of Britannia is on the top of them; they contain about six times the writing that our present notes do; there is a reference to and quotation from the charter of the company, and bear to be paid by ten pounds at a time, and to have a penny a day interest for one year.'

In 1791, Mr Pitt, the then premier of England, was busy making efforts to reduce the National Debt, which had been increased by no less a sum than one hundred and twenty-one and a quarter millions during the great American war, and at its close amounted to nearly two hundred and fifty millions. A bright idea occurred to Mr Pitt: Why not annex the Bank of England dividends for which no owners had appeared? This could not be done, however, without an act of parliament, and it was only proper to apprise the Bank of the Government's intention in this matter. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Bank's proprietors, held in the spring of 1791, the Governor was in a position to acquaint the court that a bill would be laid before parliament to appropriate the sum of five hundred thousand pounds out of the unclaimed dividends in the hands of the Bank for the use of the Government. While the bill was before parliament various attempts were made by petition to the House of Commons and personal application to Mr Pitt on the part of the Bank to get the measure withdrawn. The ministry stuck to the bill, which was read a third time; but at this stage a compromise was arrived at, under which the Bank lent the Government five hundred thousand pounds without interest, and

for so long a period as the sum of six hundred thousand pounds in unclaimed dividends should remain in the hands of the Bank.

An effort was made to get from the Bank of England a list of these dividends, which they seemed unwilling to furnish, and even forbade their employés to give any information on the subject, under peril of being discharged from their situations if they did so. At last a list of the dividends was published through the ministry putting pressure on the Bank, and for the first time moneys were brought to light which, in Mr Pitt's words, 'belonged to the public, on whose behalf and as whose agents the Bank of England paid them, and not to the proprietors of that corporation.' Until 1845 the Unclaimed Dividend Books of the Bank were regularly published; but the practice was discontinued, because fraudulent attempts to draw the dividends were so frequent. In that year the Bank received authority to investigate the circumstances connected with these unclaimed sums, so as to find out the owners. Applications for dividends must now be made direct to the Bank.

Forgeries of Bank of England notes have been attempted from time to time, and the first execution for that crime took place on 1st May 1758. This penalty has now been abolished for many years. In the spring of 1819 a curious case was brought before the Court of King's Bench. The plaintiff in the action was a man who had paid away a one-pound note of the Bank of England, which was pronounced to be a forgery. The defendant was an inspector of the Bank, and the story was to this effect: When the plaintiff learned that the note in question was a forgery, he got hold of it by stratagem, and paid the amount of it. The note was demanded back from him, but he refused to part with it. In these days it was the practice of the Bank to retain all forged notes that were presented for payment; now the Bank authorities simply stamp the word 'Forged' on such notes. For declining to deliver up the forged note, the plaintiff in this action was taken before a magistrate on the charge 'of having a note in his possession knowing it to be forged and counterfeit.' As a result of the inspector's evidence against him, he was committed to prison by a magistrate, and after three days' confine-

ment was released on bail to appear when called upon. Not having been cited for a period of twelve months, he raised an action for false imprisonment against the inspector at whose instance this had been done. During the process it was proved that the note about which all the hubbub had arisen was a genuine Bank of England one-pound note, and so the jury had no hesitation in awarding the plaintiff damages to the extent of one hundred pounds, by way of reparation of his character.

Robberies of bank-messengers, of bank clients, and even of bankers themselves occur at intervals in so large a city as London. The thefts from bank employes have taken place sometimes in the open street, and at other times at the bank counter. When the money has been handed to them and they are in the act of taking it, some one diverts their attention by a question; and while this is being answered a confederate of the dishonest querist picks up the money with all the celerity of an accomplished thief, and disappears as swiftly. When the money is sought for it cannot be found. Take again an instance of the street theft or robbery: A lady has just performed her banking business, and has hardly taken a seat in her brougham when a white-haired gentleman approaches her and expresses his great regret that a mistake has been made by the bank cashier in paying her cheque. Would she kindly let him have the money back so that the matter might be rectified? Most willingly, as he seems so insistent to spare her any trouble. The carriage waits accordingly, with its fair inmate, until the return of this courteous bank officer. Some minutes pass, however, without any sign of him, and the lady is reluctantly compelled to re-enter the bank, so as to find out the cause of the delay in his return. What is her surprise to find not the least trace of the *soi-disant* bank-messenger, and to be informed that there was no inaccuracy with the payment made to her, nor was any one deputed to make any statement to her on the subject! What became of the man may easily be surmised. He would soon strip himself of his false wig and get merged in the broad stream of London life, the component parts of which concern themselves with so little outside their own selves.

As is well known, banks act as custodians of boxes deposited with them for safe keeping. They make no charge for doing so, their object being to undertake no responsibility and incur no risk, as the acceptance of payment would imply. Naturally it happens that boxes stowed away by the banks in this manner come to be lost sight of by their owners. Those who left them for safe keeping die without passing on the secret of their existence to their heirs. Who is to know that such possessions could be claimed? It has been suggested that these boxes should be occasionally overhauled and their contents made public. An advertisement was issued in 1881, by order of

the Court of Chancery, Ireland, with a view to discover the owners of the following, amongst other valuables, deposited in a Dublin bank: '(1) Box containing a number of silver articles, coins, medals, and seals, and having on it a crest and the name "E. S. Cooper;" (2) Box containing a number of silver articles, of which several are crested with a coat of arms, supposed to be those of Viscount Netterville; (3) Box containing thirty-nine articles of plate, some of them bearing a coronet; (4) Box containing diamonds and articles of jewellery, lodged by Dr Andrew Blake and George Jennings on December 22, 1796.' The bank in question is believed to have been the old private banking firm of La Touche & Co., which amalgamated with the Munster Bank. There were some curious inquiries and tales about the chests found in their vaults, which were eventually handed over to the Court of Chancery. In the vaults of the Bank of Ireland are some chests of plate which were deposited with the bank before it moved into its present building—that is, before the year 1800—the owners of which are unknown. Some years ago, the confidential staff of the Bank of England discovered in the vaults a chest which, on being moved, literally fell to pieces from age. It contained a magnificent and very valuable toilet service of solid silver. No clue to the owner's identity could be found either on the box or on any of the pieces of plate, which were simply engraved with a cipher and a coronet. However, amongst the numerous other things found in the box was a gold casket of the period of Charles II., and a packet of old love-letters written during the time of the Restoration. These afforded some clue to the original depositor; and the directors having caused search to be made in the Bank's books, the representative of the old owner was discovered, and the plate and love-letters handed over accordingly. The sale of the plate brought in a sum which was most welcome to the poverty-stricken descendants of a once great family. So far as known there are no unclaimed boxes in the keeping of the Scotch banks.

Unclaimed deposits occasionally crop up when from time to time calls are made on banks to pay them. Instances of this become public in sufficient number to indicate that there is something in the demand for publicity of these dormant balances. A few years ago a Glasgow gentleman died, and among his possessions was an old desk. This fell to one of his heirs; and not so long since a lady connected with the family was struck with the similarity of this article of furniture to one she had herself, and she expressed curiosity as to whether it had, like her desk, a secret drawer. Examination was made, and sure enough a drawer was found, and in it two deposit-receipts for sums aggregating something over three hundred pounds. These deposits were dated away back between thirty and forty years, and one of them was on the City of Glasgow Bank.

They were, of course, duly presented, the latter to the Assets Company which took over the unliquidated portion of the City of Glasgow Bank's affairs, and both were paid, with interest. The reflection occurs that if the Assets Company were to publish a list of the holders of the unclaimed balances in their books it would lead to much of the money being claimed. In an old box with books belonging to a provincial library there was found a bank-book which must have lain there for about thirty years. The amount deposited was only three pounds fourteen shillings and ninepence; but so long had the money remained that the interest on that sum amounted to eight pounds eleven shillings and fivepence, making a total of twelve pounds fifteen shillings and ninepence—not a despicable sum in these degenerate days.

Reverting to bank robberies, an amusing tale is told by a writer on banking as to the perpetration of an act of fraud on a Lombard Street banking-house. The narrative begins with an advertisement which appeared in May 1824 in the *Morning Advertiser* asking for the services of a junior clerk at a certain part of Holborn. This announcement seems to have arrested the attention of a young Irish boy named Mike, when he had conveyed his father's meal to the public-house where he usually consumed it. The parent of the lad was a bricklayers' labourer; and, after he had finished his repast, his son set off to apply for the vacant situation. Just when Mike had got to the stair leading to the place he wanted, he was accosted by a gentlemanly-looking man, who asked his errand. On Mike telling his object, the other replied that he was the party in want of a clerk; and being sufficiently satisfied with Mike's simplicity of character, he said to him, 'I shall want you first to go into the City for me and obtain the money for a bill,' which he took out of a black case, and which he said would be paid in Lombard Street. Particular instructions were then given to Mike in the following terms: 'When you have got the money safe in your pocket, and before you leave the banking-house, stand on the step of the door and take your hat off.' While Mike thought his fortune was now made, as he wended his way to Lombard Street, his employer jumped into a cab, and, after leaving it, concealed himself in a court exactly opposite the banking-house. Here he waited for Mike, and in less than ten minutes saw the latter stand on the step of the door and take off his hat in token that he had got the money all right. Off went the employer in his cab to wait for Mike's return, happy that no one seemed to be following. The sum of four hundred and fifty-eight pounds was safely handed over by Mike to his master, who in return for the service made the youth a present of three sovereigns, telling him to buy himself a new jacket and a pair of trousers. The boy then went to relate his fortune to his mother, while his employer hurried to get gold for his notes.

On the Monday following—the date when Mike was engaged to resume his duties—he and his mother together sought the habitation of Mike's employer in Holborn. No such person as Mr Dixon could be found, nor was he even known in the locality. The next thing was to go to the bank in Lombard Street and track him out by means of the bill which Mike had cashed. Off the two went, and after a time the transaction was traced. But the bill turned out, on examination, to be a forgery; and the bank in vain tried to stop payment of the notes. They had been exchanged for gold on the previous Saturday. The bank authorities were in a quandary, and Mike and his mother had to tell them all they knew about the matter, which they did in a very circumstantial way. One of the partners of the banking-house thought he saw how the thief could be caught, and he accordingly made the following extraordinary arrangement with the simple Irish boy. After asking if Mike would know the man if he saw him, he proposed that Mike should perambulate the streets of London all day in search of the man, for which he (the banker) would allow him one pound a week; adding, 'If you find the man, or his haunts, you are to come immediately to me, and let me know.' As Mike's salary was only to be seven shillings a week from his thief employer, the transition to one pound sterling was a welcome one.

It probably occurred to Mike's Milesian mind, as it would to that of almost any other nationality, that his interest lay in not catching his quondam master. Were the latter to be arrested, then 'Othello's occupation would be gone.' At any rate, Mike never found the man he was in search of, though he roamed the busy London thoroughfares in search of his prey with the comportment of a very amateur detective. As luck would have it, Mike was ordered by his banking employer to proceed to France, in company with one of the Bow Street officers, for the purpose of being present at the coronation of Charles X., in the hope that Dixon, whom he was in search of, might be discovered among the spectators at that ceremony. Mike went to France and attended the coronation, but returned, as might be expected, without finding Dixon.

The young detective resumed his rambles in the streets of London; but the banker for whom he was acting came to see that Mike's mission was becoming too unprofitable to be continued. So, one Saturday, as Mike walked into the bank office to draw his weekly salary, he was addressed by the banker in the following terms: 'Well, my boy, you have not found that scoundrel yet, and I begin to think you do not look after him, for I never see you.' To this Mike replied with great naïveté, 'The reason is, sir, that when you are in the east I am in the west.' The upshot of it all was that Mike got his *congé* after having been three months in the banker's service.

at one pound a week, during which time he enjoyed a trip to France at the banker's expense. Mike was told that ten pounds would be paid him if he found the man. The latter was, however, not got, and the bank lost one hundred

pounds through their vain attempt to catch the perpetrator of the forged acceptance. The story seems incomplete without telling the future fate of Mike. Let us hope he went back to his father's hod and lime for an occupation.

A NATURALIST'S EXPERIENCES ON THE AMAZON.

By A. E. PRATT, F.R.G.S., Author of *The Snows of Tibet*, &c.



ANY years ago, when I was in the States, an unsophisticated old farmer, surprised at my enthusiasm in capturing insects, used to call me 'The Buggist.' The appropriateness of the title, in a land where every beetle is designated by a term only applied in England to *Cimex lectularius*, rather tickled me at the time. It may be guessed from this that I am a naturalist. In pursuit of insects: beetles, butterflies, moths, and other small deer—to say nothing of orchids—I have visited some rather out-of-the-way portions of the globe. I have been stoned and chased by the Chinese as a foreign devil bent upon obtaining the material for casting a horrible spell on the whole Mongolian race; I have chummed with some remarkably dirty Bedouins in Syria, and have had unpleasant experiences in the mountainous parts of Colombia. But one expedition, in which ill-luck dogged my steps all the time, stands out most prominently in my memory.

It was a trip I made up the river Amazon in the year 1892. My object was to make observations, and fix the latitude, &c., of certain places very seldom visited by Europeans; also to obtain specimens of the flora and fauna. Having been up the Mississippi and Missouri and the Yang-tsze-kiang, I knew something about inland navigation; and I was, I confess, rather eager to see something of the vast river which drains the region of the Andes.

I need not detail my experiences in crossing the ocean; they were of the ordinary type. In due course I arrived at Pará. I had with me a number of scientific instruments; and on my arrival in Brazil I was terribly worried by officials; they would not be convinced that my object was strictly scientific. I did not know it at the time, but learned afterwards that my instruments caused a lively discussion, and that the newspapers of the country gravely asserted that I was going up to the borders of British Guiana to annex territory. After a great deal of trouble I managed to get a sort of passport from the president telling people to help me; but, alas! I did not know that edicts were also secretly sent along, forbidding people to assist me in any way. Not knowing this, however, I proceeded up the river.

I was even more impressed by the Amazon than I had been by the Mississippi. It was difficult to imagine that the wonderful waters over which we steamed day after day were those of a river, or that when we arrived at Manóas we were nearly a thousand miles from the sea. The steamers run up to Manóas to take the rubber, which is one of the chief products of the country; and, having arrived there, my wish was to get as far up the Rio Negro as possible.

Then it was I discovered one of the pleasant little customs of the country. The government, I need hardly explain, is a republic—tempered by revolutions.

Amongst those who came under the suspicions of the powers that be was a young gentleman of Rio Janeiro. He was driving as usual one morning to his office when he was stopped by the military. He was not even permitted to say 'Good-bye' to his wife, but was hurried on board a steamer, where he found himself with a number of other suspects. He expected something unpleasant when the steamer left Rio; and he was not disappointed, for he learnt that they were to be taken to the most desolate and deserted part of the fever-haunted Rio Negro. The captors were so far amenable to the public opinion of the civilised world that they did not like to shoot their political prisoners, so they sent them to a place where fever or *berri-berri* would be almost certain to finish them off. But it so happened that the gentleman I have mentioned, having Scotch blood in his veins, had acquired considerable wealth—some said he was a millionaire. Being rich, he naturally had friends who managed to smuggle occasional supplies to him. A steam-launch was leaving about the time I was at Manóas to take these supplies to the place where he and his friends had been transported, which was about four hundred miles up the Rio Negro.

After accidents and drawbacks innumerable, which I then thought a most extraordinary streak of ill-luck, but which I now believe were intentionally arranged, I fell in with the steam-launch which was smuggling sheep and decent provisions to these political exiles; and when those on board found out that, like the Irish emigrant of another part of the continent, I was 'agin' the government, they very readily agreed to take me to the place they were going to,

which they called by the high-sounding name, San Isabel. Like Martin Chuzzlewit, I expected San Isabel to be a town where I should find a few of the amenities of civilisation.

Never shall I forget the magnificent affluent of the Amazon up which we steamed. On leaving Manoa, after steaming for nine hours, I could easily imagine myself on the ocean again. The river widens out to such an extent that we could see no land around us. After steaming for a time up the Rio Negro the banks became visible again, and I could see that on each side was forest with trees of immense height. I was told that at a certain season of the year the river rose ninety feet, and overflowed into these forests for, in some cases, hundreds of miles. There is a six months' rise and a six months' fall of the river; and at the time I was there the river was at three-quarters flood.

When, in due course, we reached San Isabel my heart fell in a manner which again suggested Martin's impressions of Eden, and I wished for a Mark Tapley to cheer me up. Unfortunately my English companion and assistant was not a Mark Tapley. San Isabel simply consisted of three huts or shelters, made in the rudest fashion, in a swamp surrounded by virgin forest. It was merely a place for the Indians to bring the rubber they collected, and where it was called for at irregular and infrequent intervals. In this fever-haunted region the poor wretches of exiles had been left. How glad they were to see us! Their means were scanty, but their hospitality was lavish. From the young fellow I have mentioned (who spoke English fluently) I heard the story of his abduction, and he introduced me to his companions in misery, one of whom had been a colonel in the Brazilian army. He wrote to me subsequently from Paris, and he then told me that, though they eventually managed to escape, three or four of their number died of fever. It did not take me long to come to the conclusion that San Isabel was a place to get away from. I could not proceed up the river. There were no suitable craft, and no stores to be had for love or money. I could have gone back in the steamer, but I wished to examine the virgin forest on the banks and do some collecting. With immense difficulty I eventually managed to secure a dug-out canoe and a couple of Indians to paddle it; and, bidding a friendly farewell to the political exiles, I commenced a journey down the river, camping on its banks at night.

The Rio Negro takes its name from the colour of its water, which is a rich coffee-tint, and discolours the Amazon, where it joins it, for miles. This water has the peculiarity of quickly clearing a vessel's hull of the algæ. I wondered why this should be so; but when I examined the sand on the banks of the river (which is black when wet, and gray when dry) it looked to me

very like iron pyrites. While we were on the Amazon we were terribly tormented by mosquitoes, and I was struck by the fact that on entering the Rio Negro these pests suddenly disappeared, and we saw no more of them. Our rejoicings, however, were soon cut short, for the mosquitoes were replaced by the equally objectionable sand-flies, which are called *pions* in the country. These savage little pests, when we camped out, tormented us fearfully. The irritation caused by their bites did not subside for a fortnight in my case, and they nearly drove me distracted.

It is delicate work to balance a dug-out canoe; and as my specimens increased in number we sank deeper and deeper into the water, till eventually we had hardly three inches freeboard. The discomfort of travelling four hundred miles in such a craft can be imagined. I had to lie very still in the bottom of the canoe, hardly daring to move. The Indians I found to be capital fellows; they paddled up creeks and through openings in the forest which saved us many miles. On the banks, few and far between, we saw places where the Portuguese had tried to establish settlements. These were all overgrown; fever had killed many of the settlers, and driven the rest away. We sometimes paddled for days without meeting a soul. Now and then we saw a cayman float lazily with the stream, or toss a fish which he had caught. We camped out on the banks at night, and it was a great treat to stretch one's self after the cramping canoe.

Our food was mostly *cassava* (or manioc) and fish which the Indians caught. These fish are large and have enormous scales; but their flesh is flabby and tastes insipid. Once when I was trailing my hand in the water the Indians warned me not to do so, as I might have my finger snapped off; and, as I looked at the teeth of some of the larger fish we caught, I could well believe it. When going through some of the quiet, shallow lagoons I heard a strange booming sound, which I was afterwards told was caused by electric-eels. I noticed that the Indians were strangely averse to entering the water, and thought perhaps they were afraid of the eels; but was told that there was also a very much dreaded creature which would effect an entrance into the bodies of men or animals, causing excruciating pain. The Indians, however, were experts at varying our dietary; and on one occasion, when we were all very hot and tired, they felled a species of palm, and cut out the young leaves at the centre; it tasted like a delicious lettuce, with a peculiarly sweet and delicate flavour all its own. On another occasion I also tasted the *sapucaya* nut, and thought its flavour far superior to the Brazil nut, with which we in England are better acquainted. It grows in enormous pods, about the size of a man's head. When it reaches maturity the cap of the pod falls off, scattering the nuts inside in all directions, which quickly become the food of

the monkeys. The pod containing the Brazil nut falls intact, and the monkeys cannot crack it; hence it is so much more commonly seen in England than the sapucaya nut. The forest was very silent. We heard an occasional scream from a monkey or a bird. There were beasts of prey evidently; because once, when we had paddled ashore, and were tying our canoe to the banks, I saw a jaguar in the tree above me; but he was off before I could get my gun. On another occasion a huge anaconda slipped past us and entered the water. During these intermissions of paddling I made excursions into the forest, and secured many specimens, some hitherto undescribed.

As we proceeded the river increased in size. Its width may be judged by the fact that on one occasion, when I wished to cross to the other side, it took my Indians four hours to do so. We were nine days paddling down. Towards the end we were delayed by tropical storms. The thunder and lightning were really terrifying in their vehemence, and the wind raised such a swell that we could not venture to encounter it in our frail craft. Fortunately the country began to be more populated; and once, when we had lost our way and a storm came on, we were very glad to obtain refuge in a hut where we found several Indians. One of these was very ill, almost *in extremis*. I did what I could for him, but was struck by the utter indifference of a younger Indian, who was said to be the old man's son, and who would do nothing to second my efforts. He, however, set our Indians on the right course, and we arrived at Manoa's thoroughly worn out.

To show the wonderful endurance of the Indians I may say that they paddled at the last for thirty hours in succession without intermission, and without speaking.

After we had recruited, I thought I would try to get up the Rio Branco, an affluent of the Rio Negro, as I heard that a launch was to proceed to a place called Caracacai (which I cannot find marked on any map) for cattle, and would tow up several barges. I thought it might also tow a boat with my belongings and an Indian canoe. It was with great difficulty I obtained a reluctant permission to join the small string of boats which the steam-launch was towing; but no one would render me any assistance, not even Indians. I think labour must have been rather scarce, for the stoker of the rotten little launch was a half-caste woman, and the crews of the launch and the other boats were mostly Indians and half-breeds. We left on August 12th, and passed an old settlement, Santa Maria, but there were no inhabitants; all had died of fever. We had hardly entered the Rio Branco when we encountered a terrific storm in the wide part of the river, where again we could see no land. There was soon a sea as choppy as I have seen in the Channel. The launch lost some of her bulwarks,

and I could see that the captain and his men were terribly frightened.

Before we got to Caracacai several of our men became ill with fever, and one poor fellow died. We delayed our journey just long enough to bury him on the shore, but again had to stop to perform the same mournful office for another. By the time we reached Caracacai, on 21st August, nearly every member of the expedition was more or less ill. I will not weary the reader with details of the minor accidents—how the launch's cranky machinery kept going wrong, and the pilot, who had only been up once before, lost his way. I had to do all my own work, and as I began to feel very ill myself, became less and less able to do it. However, they found our destination eventually, and about fifty head of cattle were put on the lighters we towed. These appeared to have been driven from a healthier district, for in the distance we saw mountain ranges which do not appear on any map I have yet seen, and which I was told had never been visited by Europeans. On our return journey I had great demands made upon the surgical appliances I had taken with me. We had repeatedly to go ashore and cut wood for the launch; and on one of these occasions a branch fell on our pilot, smashing his face and cutting the poor fellow's nose off. He was knocked perfectly senseless, and but for the remedies and appliances I had brought would have bled to death. When he was down our voyage became still more exasperating, for we kept losing our way and getting aground.

The irritation caused by this, the illness, and want of proper food—for, the voyage having lasted longer than was anticipated, our stores began to give out—caused the crew to become sullen and mutinous. It was largely the captain's fault. He was a perfect brute, and hailed from Gibraltar. I called him the 'Rock Scorpion.' He had repeated fracas with the crew, one of whom eventually drew his knife, Portuguese fashion. They carved each other quite scientifically. Again demands were made upon my surgical-box, and I admit I begrudged my bandages in this case. Then the cattle on the lighters, which were rendered furious through lack of food and attention, gored an attendant who went to them, and nearly killed him; in fact he would have died but for my bandaging, &c.

All this time I was getting weaker and weaker, and the entries in my diary became few and far between. I can recall little of the last part of the journey; but we arrived at Manoa's on 2d September. I then found I was suffering from *berri-berri*, a disease in which the ankles first swell. As the disease creeps upwards it benumbs each part it attacks. There was no cure but change of climate, so I took the earliest opportunity of getting out of the horrible country; and it took me some time to recover my usual health

when I eventually reached home. I shall never forget the irritation and suffering of that, to me, utterly useless voyage up the Rio Branco.

What struck me most was the vastness of the great river and its tributaries, and its resemblance to the sea; even porpoises are found in its waters, and a manatee peculiar to the river. Next was the scarcity of the population. I do not think we met half-a-dozen people—and they were Indians—all the way coming down from San

Isabel, four hundred miles. The remains of settlements tell the cause, and testify to the unhealthiness of the region. Then, too, the awfulness of the tropical storms is vividly impressed on my memory; the terrific thunder and lightning, the groaning of the huge trees, and the crash when some monarch of the forest falls. On the whole, however, after my experience I am not surprised that travellers give the upper reaches of the Amazon and its tributaries a wide berth.

SWIFT'S LONDON LIFE.



It is hardly possible to exaggerate the debt which all who take an interest in social history owe to those keepers of diaries and writers of journals in days gone by, who by their notings of the trivial, everyday incidents of their lives have thus preserved for us the very atmosphere of the past, and have given lifelikeness and reality to all our imaginings of the sayings and doings of our forefathers.

Among the various records of this kind few are more interesting than the series of intimate and playful letters which the saturnine Dean of St Patrick's wrote to 'Stella' and her companion, Mrs Dingley, in Ireland, during his prolonged residence in London—before obtaining his deanery—in the days of Queen Anne. These letters are doubtless valuable material for political as well as for social history; but most readers nowadays are little interested in the details of Swift's intrigues, first with one political party and then with the other. These pullings of party wires, and fears and hopes regarding matters of foreign and domestic policy, are all dead and devoid of interest. But the thousand and one details of Swift's daily life, and the light which his sayings and doings throw on the everyday course of existence in London nearly two hundred years ago, are full of living interest.

We learn what lodgings cost in those days. Swift lodges for a while in Bury Street, and for a sitting-room and bedchamber on the first floor pays eight shillings a week. This he calls 'plaguy deep.' More than a year later, when he moves to Chelsea, he has to pay six shillings a week for what he describes as 'one silly room with confounded coarse sheets.' Swift had a keen eye for thrift. He turns his friends' tables to good account; for, after living nearly a month in London in the dead season, he is able to write that 'it has cost me but three shillings in meat and drink since I came here, as thin as the town is.' A few days later he invites himself to dine with a friend, but unfortunately finds him from home. Whereupon he complains that he was forced to go to a chop-house and dine for tenpence on 'gill ale, bad broth, and three chops' of mutton.' The cost

of the then indispensable wig alarms him. He pays three guineas one day for a periwig, and exclaims 'I am undone!' He is amusingly parsimonious with his coals. Before going to bed he picks the unburned pieces off his fire; and one evening, when he comes home late and finds a large fire wasting its warmth on the desert room, he roundly abuses his manservant, Patrick, for his carelessness. Occasionally the economist gets 'let in,' as the modern colloquial phrase has it. He goes with a friend, Sir Andrew Fountaine, one evening to a tavern, where for two bottles of wine they have sixteen shillings to pay. 'But if ever he catches me so again,' says Swift emphatically, 'I will spend as many pounds.'

As we read we see much of the social life and intercourse of the town focussed in the taverns and coffee-houses. Swift goes into the City with a companion. They dine at a chop-house with a learned woollen-draper, then saunter in china and book shops, stroll into a tavern where they drink two pints of white wine, and do not separate till ten in the evening. In the earlier part of his stay in London, Swift spends many evenings with Addison and Steele, and others of their well-known circle, at the coffee and wine laden tables of Button's Coffee-house. His letters are addressed to the St James's Coffee-house, and are placed in the frame of the large glass behind the bar, where Harley, the Minister, espies them, and, struck by the resemblance of Stella's handwriting to Swift's own, asks his reverence how long he has had the trick of writing letters to himself. One evening Swift christens the child of Elliot, the St James's coffee-man, and after the ceremony attends a supper given by the father, when Steele and he sit with 'some scurvy company' over a bowl of punch until a late hour. Other times, other manners.

Twelfth Day was well observed in those times. Swift, going into the City on that day in 1711, says he was stopped by clusters of boys and girls 'buzzing about the cake-shops like flies.' The cakes were frothed with sugar and adorned with tinsel streamers. One day Swift good-naturedly conducts a party of country visitors to see the sights. They visit the lions in the Tower, go

to Bedlam (which then figured in the list of London entertainments), dine at a chop-house behind the Exchange, look in at Gresham College, and wind up the evening at the Puppet-show, a kind of glorified Punch and Judy. On another evening he goes with one or two members of the same party to Vauxhall, to hear the nightingales!

The ladies in Ireland entrust their correspondent with a variety of commissions, as ladies are still wont to do. Chocolate and handkerchiefs, palsy-water and spectacles, a petticoat and a microscope, tobacco (for Mrs Dingley, alas!) and books, aprons, pocket-books, and pounds of tea—all are duly bought at shops in Pall Mall, Paternoster Row, Ludgate Hill, and elsewhere, and are carefully packed and despatched to Ireland. When Swift buys books for himself he is by no means stingy. One day he goes into a shop kept by a bookseller named Bateman, and lays out forty-eight shillings. On another visit to the same shop he spends twenty-five shillings on a Strabo and an Aristophanes, and resolves to buy more. Raffling for books seems to have been then a common kind of amusement. Swift embarks in one speculation of this kind, but grumbles that though he laid out four pounds seven shillings, he only got half-a-dozen volumes.

The letters give us vivid little pictures of street life. Going home one evening along the Strand, Swift breaks his shin over a tub of sand left out in the pathway. He goes straight to bed, and applies goldbeater's skin, abusing his servant for being nearly an hour in bringing a rag from next door. A snowy day comes, and poor Swift has to spend two shillings in chair and coach hire, besides walking till he is dirty. Walking is dangerous because of the slippery state of the streets, and Swift notes that a baker's boy had broken his thigh by a fall the day before. He says that he himself takes care to walk slowly, takes short steps, and never treads on his heel. In support of this he quotes a Devonshire saying:

Walk fast in snow,
In frost walk slow;
And still as you go,
Tread on your toe.

When frost and snow are both together,
Sit by the fire and spare shoe-leather.

Here is a curious little picture. Walking to town from Chelsea one morning, Swift sees two old lame men standing at the door of a brandy-shop for a long time, 'complimenting who should go in first.' This was not much to tell, he says, but an admirable jest to see.

Swift is always grumbling at the price of wine. The basest, he remarks once, costs six shillings a bottle; but, on the other hand, fruit is cheap, for the finest oranges are twopence apiece, which does not strike the modern purchaser of oranges as remarkably cheap. At Pontack's, a famous

restaurant in the City, the proprietor assures his customers that although his wine is so good he asks only seven shillings a flask for it. 'Are not these pretty rates?' exclaims Swift. He confesses that when he hears of choice books for sale he itches to spend money on them; but the cost of wine is a continual trouble. Swift grumbles, too, at the cost of tipping great men's servants, especially at Christmas-time, when he makes a round of calls, dropping half-crowns with a lavishness which must have troubled him greatly.

The *Journal to Stella* is indeed, in modern literary slang, a very human document. It shows us aspects of the author of *Gulliver* and of the *Tale of a Tub*, and of many another biting satire, which but for these letters could hardly have been known to us. It records many a kindly deed as well as many a sharp saying; much playful humour as well as not a few grossnesses. Its chief recommendation and most valuable voucher is that, unlike some self-revelations of later date, it was obviously written without a thought of publication, and is therefore absolutely free from posing of any kind.

BALLADE OF A QUIET ROMANTICIST.

DAYLONG, for a scanty wage,
Caged, I drive a weary quill;
But at eve my head's a stage
Where a thousand actors drill.
Swords are glancing, fifers shrill,
Silks and jewels gleam and shine,
Flutter flounce and ruff and frill—
And the hero's part is mine.

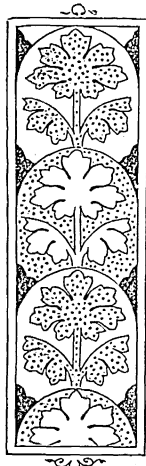
All for me the fair and sage
Juliet's at her window-sill;
Bold Sir Brian lifts my gage,
Whose false blood my sword shall spill;
O'er my body stiff and still
Enid tears her hair divine;
Bells are tolled and cities thrill—
And the hero's part is mine.

Gentle, simple, knight or page,
Every ruffler's skin I fill;
Yea, and charm this modern age
With sublime detective skill;
Wheresoever knaves plot ill,
Virtue sinks, fair maids repine,
There am I to help or kill—
And the hero's part is mine.

ENVOI.

Prince, I envy not your chill
State and ceremonial fine,
While Romance has all her will,
And the hero's part is mine.

WALTER HOGG.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

IN THE GARDEN OF THE GULF.



WHILE I am neither a Mexican ranchman, an American cowboy, nor a Canadian trapper, and while my experiences have not been of the blood-curdling character, I have probably seen and known enough in my time to furnish pleasant and restful reading to such as care nothing for the sensational novel on the one hand, or the able but heavy review on the other.

Perhaps a few words about myself may not be unacceptable. My father was a sergeant in the Ninety-third Highlanders, and at the time of my birth the regiment was stationed in Fort-George, Scotland. The regiment was sent to Canada to assist in putting down the Papineau and Mackenzie rebellion, and after the troubles were over we made Prince Edward Island our home.

This island, first known as Saint John, then as New Ireland, and now as above named, was so called in honour of the father of our good Queen Victoria; it is now frequently spoken of as 'The Garden of the Gulf,' and is indeed an isle of great beauty. From east to west the island measures about one hundred and forty-five miles, and varies in breadth from three to thirty miles; and it has a population of about one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants. Its agricultural capabilities are great; the soil is rich and productive, and is nearly all under cultivation. It was not so when I was a boy. Large portions of it were then covered with dense forests, in which the bear, the wild-cat, and the fox roamed in undisturbed security, and where the Indian was monarch of all he surveyed.

The educational advantages enjoyed by the youth of the island to-day are very far in advance of what they were in my boyhood's days. Under the free, non-sectarian system that now obtains, goodly buildings dot the land, in which well-trained teachers offer to all the blessings of a thorough common-school education. The teachers are paid out of the provincial treasury; and the child of the humblest has the same rights and

privileges with the child of the highest. It was not so in my time. Then the schoolhouse was a log structure, the light was dim if not religious, and the furnishings were of the most primitive character. Many of the teachers were young and inexperienced, poorly equipped for service, and poorly paid. My first teacher was a Scottish Highlander, a queer little fellow, full of airs, who never lost an opportunity to magnify his office. He taught both in English and in Gaelic, and had some original ideas concerning the training of children. When anything went wrong, he would require the whole school to stand, and, after delivering an harangue, in which big words would abound, he would whip us all, so as to be sure to punish the guilty ones. We often talked of mobbing him; but, as we were all little fellows, it always ended in talk. In this we differed from the boys of another school, the teacher of which was a very cruel man of the name of Coster.

In the neighbourhood of this man's schoolhouse was a steep hill extending about a quarter of a mile from the top to the level ground, and which in winter was the common coasting-ground for the neighbourhood. One day, when the teacher had been unusually severe, several of the taller lads took hold of him, hustled him outdoors, tied him securely to a sled, and sent him down the dangerous declivity, amid wild cheering, while one witty lassie cried out 'Good-bye, Mr Coaster.' It was a wonder he was not killed, for the way he went down that hill was enough to appal one; but he sustained no serious injury. That, however, ended his career as a teacher, and he soon took his departure from the scene of his inglorious adventure. While we did not use our dominie so badly, we did worry him not a little. However, he had his good points. He was interested in his work, was anxious to be helpful to us, and, to his credit be it spoken, awakened within the bosoms of some of these wild lads such a thirst for knowledge as led them to seek other and more capable instructors. Thus, before he joined

the great majority, several of those he proudly spoke of as 'My Boys' were filling important positions in Church and State.

Winter travelling on the island is sometimes very hazardous. This arises from the fact that all the rivers, bays, and the sea itself for miles from the shore, are solidly frozen over, and the ice is much resorted to by teamsters and travellers. As soon as it is considered sufficiently strong to bear heavy loads, holes are cut in the ice at certain points or crossings, in which are placed small fir-trees at short distances apart, as guides to those who travel that way. It is a great temptation to take to the smooth ice, and cross over from point to point instead of wading through the snowdrifts for perhaps three times the distance, around by a bridge. I have driven for a whole day, with the green salt-water under me, at from two to three miles from the shore, and on that route had to cross a bay fifteen miles wide. When the weather is fine, the ice smooth, and the traveller, with a good horse, is well wrapped up in furs, such a drive is delightful; a carriage-ride on a summer's day is not to be compared with it. But there is always more or less danger. In the very coldest weather there are what are called airholes, into which a careless Jehu may easily drive. There are cracks in the ice sometimes a mile long and sufficiently wide to let a team through; and to drop into one of these is no uncommon occurrence. When a horse goes through, the sleigh seldom follows, and if the driver has his wits about him he generally saves the animal. The first thing to be done is to draw a rope tightly around the horse's neck, when he will at once rise to the surface; and by a little skilful manœuvring he will be landed on the unbroken ice. I recall a case in which a man saved himself by his presence of mind. He had fallen through, and was in danger of being swept under the ice. His hands were encased in woollen mittens, which he dipped, first the one and then the other, in the water, and then laid them on the ice, to which they instantly froze, and by this he was enabled to sustain himself until his cries brought help. But the greatest danger to the traveller is when he is overtaken in a snow-storm, or when a fog settles down upon him. He is then absolutely without anything to guide him, and is liable to drive out to sea or into one of these dangerous airholes or cracks, and find a watery grave. More than once I have found myself in extreme peril. I have wandered for hours in the vicinity of open water, utterly bewildered, yet compelled to keep moving for fear of falling into the fatal sleep which intense cold produces. On one occasion, having mistaken the mark of an Indian's sled for that of an ordinary sleigh, I took the ice rather than the longer way round. I soon found the ice bending beneath our weight. I had a young lady friend with me, who, while realising our danger, kept perfectly

cool and self-possessed. The water was deep, we were about a quarter of a mile from the shore. To check our speed or try to turn was not to be entertained, so we did what the engineer does when he feels the bridge giving way: we sprang forward, and reached more solid footing as the water came rushing through the cracks behind us. And yet, considering the number of miles thus travelled, the many persons who daily pass to and fro upon the ice, and the large amount of business done in this way, there are indeed very few accidents.

As the island is thus ice-bound for about four months in the year, its people have had during that time comparatively little intercourse with those residing on the mainland. One of the conditions upon which they consented to connect themselves with the Dominion of Canada was the establishment of regular communication with the outer world during the winter. A steamer was specially built for the purpose, which was supposed to be able to break through the strongest ice, but she has not proved a success. The latest proposal is to construct a subway beneath 'the streak of silver sea' which separates the island from New Brunswick, and which at its narrowest part is only about nine miles across. Borings have been made in several places, estimates were laid before parliament, and the scheme has been pronounced a feasible one. In that case Jack Frost may do what he pleases with the surface of the waters; he will not be able to interfere with the passing of the iron horse underneath them.

In the meantime, the safest and the speediest means of communication is by what is known as the Ice-Boat Service. This has been in use a great many years, and every winter sees an increasing number of business men and others availing themselves of the opportunity thus afforded to reach the great outside world. Everything possible has been done to secure the safety and comfort of the voyagers; danger now is but little dreaded, and even women and children not infrequently take the risks. The distance between Cape Traverse on the island and Cape Tormentine in New Brunswick is only nine miles, and, when the weather is fine and the conditions favourable, the crossing can be made in three or four hours. The boats are furnished with both oars and runners, the first for use in open water, and the second for use on the ice. The shore-ice is usually good, in which case all may ride; but the serious part of the journey is when the boat has to be pushed or pulled through broken or floating ice. Then comes the exciting time. The managers with might and main work with oars and boathooks to force their way, or, with the passengers—women of course excepted—hold on to straps attached to the sides of the boat and seek to draw it along. Every now and then some one goes through and gets a cold bath but

is soon fished up by his travelling companions, who cannot afford to laugh at his misfortunes, as they may be in the same plight the next moment. Jumping from cake to cake of the floating ice, which may or may not be strong enough to sustain him, and slipping, scrambling, puffing like a porpoise or gasping with nervousness, the novice in such experiences furnishes good fun to those whose business has made all this an old story.

As already stated, the dangers attendant upon crossing the Straits have been so well provided against that accidents now are few in number and trivial in character. But, again to use an old man's phrase, such was not the case when I was a boy. I remember a very sad occurrence which took place in 1855. The ice-boat from Cape Tormentine, with three passengers on board, had almost reached the island shore when farther progress was rendered impossible by a blinding snowstorm. For five days and nights they drifted helplessly about, vainly endeavouring to reach land. During these dreary days and drearier nights all the food they had was the flesh of a little dog belonging to one of the passengers, and which they had killed and eaten. One of the passengers died from exhaustion on the fourth day, and all were badly frozen; had they not been rescued when they were they would all have perished in a few hours.

Owing to its exposed position, the northern and eastern coasts of the island are sometimes swept by tremendous storms. I have a very distinct recollection of one of these. It was away back in the fifties, during the period of the Reciprocity Treaty between the United States and Great Britain, when at certain seasons of the year the waters would be dotted over with American fishing vessels. The coast is a dangerous one. For miles and miles there is nothing like a safe harbour, and a reef of sunken rocks runs out into the sea for some ten miles, with scarcely water enough over it to float a canoe.

The day referred to was a wild one; the wind blew furiously, the sea ran high, and a drenching rain added to the gloom and discomfort of the occasion. All through that dismal day the poor fishermen laboured hard to keep off-shore, but many failed to do so. Vessel after vessel drifted by—sails, spars, all gone, and their crews perfectly helpless in the presence of the angry elements. Every now and then some boat would be driven upon the rocks, the waves would sweep over her, and the poor fellows on board be swept into the boiling flood. Towards evening one of the largest of the vessels was seen approaching the place of peril. Finding it impossible to bring her about, they let go her anchors in the hope of being able to outlive the storm; but the hope was vain. She, too, was driven ashore, and soon went to pieces. It was supposed all had perished, when those who were on the beach were thrilled by the

cry: 'There's a man with a woman in his arms.' Yes, sure enough, there he was, struggling with the wild waves, evidently determined to save her or perish in the attempt. 'Sure, thin, an' I can't shtand that,' said a brawny Irishman who was intently gazing at the man in the water. 'Indade, I can't. No doubt the poor craythur is his wife; and I'll try and help him, so I will.' Fastening a rope around him, and giving such directions as he deemed necessary, he plunged into the water, and for a time was lost sight of. Ere long he reached the heavily-burdened man, and after almost superhuman efforts succeeded in bringing him safely to land. Poor Pat was badly bruised, and to the end of life was a cripple as the result of his adventure; but he felt more than repaid when he learned all he had done. Carefully wrapped up and bound to the woman's bosom was a tender infant of a few months old. The husband had sustained comparatively little injury; but the wife was to all appearance dead. She was promptly cared for, and after some time gave signs of returning consciousness. Her first words were—'Winthrop—Eva.' Strange to say, the babe was unharmed—a beautiful blue-eyed creature—her sweet young face reminded one of what Moses must have been when rescued by the daughter of Pharaoh. Pat was not uncared for. He was taken by those he had befriended to their Massachusetts home, and spent the rest of his days in comfort, living long enough to see the child, his 'darlint Eva,' happy in a home of her own.

But here, as elsewhere, disaster sometimes comes to other than fishing vessels. I remember one case of shipwreck, the circumstances connected with which aroused a widespread feeling of grief and indignation. The regular steamer, with mails and passengers, was crossing the Straits from the island to the mainland, when, through some derangement of the machinery, the vessel became unmanageable, and was abandoned by the captain and a part of the crew. By clinging to portions of the wreck some of the passengers were finally rescued, but several found a watery grave; and among those lost was a young lady who had been visiting friends on the island previous to leaving for the Old Country, where she was to have been married. Her affianced had been pastor of a church in one of our cities by the sea, but had received and accepted a call to a church in the Motherland. Pressing duties had prevented his returning for his bride, and it had been arranged that he should meet her in Liverpool; instead of this he met the sad news that her body lay sleeping beneath the cold waters. The shock was too great for him, and for a time reason gave way. After his recovery from a long illness, he resigned his charge, sought rest and change in travel, and looked for death on the battlefields of the Crimea. He returned to his native land, recrossed the Atlantic; and the

last I heard of him he was preaching doctrines very unlike those which he had been wont so eloquently to proclaim to interested audiences—doctrines that neither Luther, Knox, nor Wesley would have endorsed.

In the days to which I refer farming was in its infancy, and men had in other ways to provide for their immediate needs. While the mother and younger children would care for the cattle and look after things around home, the father and grown-up boys would hire out for the winter with some 'lumber operator.' They would go to the woods in November, and, unless called home for some special reason, would remain there until the middle of March. In company with a few friends, I spent several days in camp, and never enjoyed an outing so much. There was certainly something wild and weird-like in the surroundings. Stretching away for miles in every direction was the unbroken forest, no human habitation near, and no sound to disturb the quiet of the night but the hooting of the owl or the barking of the fox. In the daytime the silence was broken by the ringing blows of the woodman's axe, the crash of falling trees, or the stentorian tones of the teamster as he warily guided his horses down some dangerous roadway. After the day's work was done, the horses cared for, and sundry other matters attended to, supper would be served, which was the principal meal of the day. This usually consisted of pork and beans baked in a pot buried in the fire, potatoes, bread and butter, and tea, without milk of course, sweetened with molasses. My! what appetites these woodmen had. The speedy disappearance of such piles of food was enough to make a miser groan, and furnished pretty conclusive evidence that lumbering had to pay well to cover the expenses of the commissariat department. Supper over, the men, fifty or sixty in number, would lie around the huge fire, smoking, telling stories, singing songs, or patching their garments.

As one of our party was a clergyman, during our stay we had a sermon and a lecture, notice having been sent to other crews in the neighbourhood. It was rather a picturesque gathering. A huge fire blazed away in the centre, the smoke from which found its way to the outer world through an opening in the roof. Around us were scores of rough-looking, unshaven men, clad in attire befitting their calling. The attention paid to the speaker was all that could have been desired, and the heartiness with which they joined in the singing showed they had not wholly neglected the gift of song.

During our stay we visited 'The Brows,' and saw how the lumber was 'yarded.' The brows are places on the banks of the streams from which the trees have been removed, the ground levelled, and made to slope away to the water's edge. To these places the logs are hauled, piled in heaps running parallel with the stream, and left there

until spring, when they are rolled into the water and floated down to the mills. This log-rolling is wild work. Skids are laid down from the pile along the descent, and on these the logs go bounding at a fearful rate. Sometimes several of these will start together, and then woe betide the man who is unfortunately a little slow in his movements, or who fails to get out of the way of the moving mass. Sometimes a man gets wedged in between two logs whose progress has been arrested, and, when perhaps after tons of timber have rolled over him, and his fellow-workmen believe he has been crushed to death, he is found almost without a scratch. Occasionally, however, a leg or an arm is broken or the body bruised, and now and then a life is lost; but the men know so well what to do under such circumstances that serious accidents occur but rarely.

Stream-driving takes place later in the season. On some of the brooks and streams dams are built, so that a sufficiency of water may be had if the snowfall has been light or the spring-rains not up to the average. When the time arrives to begin operations, the logs are rolled into the streams as above stated, and then run into the booms. The dam gates are then opened, the booms broken, and the cry is, 'Let her drive.' For a time everything goes well; log after log shoots away down the stream as swift as an arrow, each seeming anxious to out-distance the other. But the scene may suddenly change—a log gets caught on a rock or a sunken piece of timber, and then occurs what no pen-and-ink description can give any adequate idea of. Urged on by the force of the current, which grows stronger and stronger by this temporary check, the logs get piled up in enormous heaps, some lengthwise, some crosswise, and some standing erect or perpendicular. Then comes the tug of war. Like the keystone of an arch, one of these logs controls the situation, and by hook or by crook that one has to be dislodged. Courage is not so much needed as coolness—a sharp eye, steady nerves, and a sure and fleet foot are what are now required. Armed with handspikes (or, as they are termed, peevies), the workmen go out upon the logs and cautiously search for the one or ones on which so much rests. By the judicious use of these formidable tools, or by the cutting away of the obstructionist logs, the jam is broken, and to get out of harm's way as quickly as possible is the one thought of the drivers. As they leap from log to log, over this one and around that one, slipping, scrambling, and dodging such as threaten to harm them, an onlooker becomes greatly excited, and is terrified at the risks the poor fellows have to run. It is indeed alarming, and once seen is never forgotten. The rush and roar of the waters, the pounding and grinding of the logs against each other and against the rocks, the tearing away of the banks, and the uprooting of trees, and the shouts of the men

combine to produce a scene at once unique and indescribable.

There are other matters about which I might write, illustrative of the occupations, habits, and character of the people of this lovely little

island; but I must guard against an old man's weakness, and not weary the reader by overdoing my subject. I now, therefore, conclude my recollections of what has been done in 'The Garden of the Gulf.'

TREGAVIS THE CHEMIST.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.



WAS a night of miracles, Roscorla afterwards declared. When the two men bobbed up on the lumpy water, there was the great steamer plain enough, with its long hull and funnel and masts dimly outlined. The mist had suddenly cleared—the fringe of it was driving northward—and presently a glimmer of a moon made its brief appearance in the watery sky. There was much shouting on the big vessel, and a timely flinging of life-belts. The fishing-boat had not been sighted until a collision was inevitable; it sprang out from the mist like a phantom under the very bows of the steamer. The engines were stopped, and a boat was lowered to the heavy sea; then the vessel moved slowly astern. In three minutes the Langissack men were picked up, and were soon on the deck of the steamer, the objects of rough but kindly ministrations.

Strangely enough, the chemist was the better swimmer, and seemed little the worse for his immersion; but Johnny Roscorla was exhausted, and would have gone under but for a life-belt that floated to his grasp. The skipper came forward and greeted the rescued men. He was a little, corpulent man, with a red-whiskered face half-fierce and half-comic. He had been roused from his berth, and had come hurriedly on deck, grotesquely clad in dirty pyjamas and a pea-jacket. There was a leer of coarse humour at his mouth, and he had the look of a man not altogether sober.

'Fishing-boat?' he asked gruffly of Roscorla.

'Iss,' answered Johnny, shuddering, for he had swallowed a gallon of Channel water; '*Gilliflower* o' Langissack.'

'All picked up?'

'Iss—there's only the two of us.'

'Insured?'

'I believe so; but I can't tell 'ee, for ted'n my boat.'

'Well, I'm sorry enough for this bad job; but it's a mercy we fished ye up,' said the skipper. 'I'm Cap'n Bunker, at your service, and this coal-scuttle is the *Nautilus* o' Shields. You're not altogether unwelcome, for we're bound to Valparaiso, short-handed. 'Tain't exactly a pleasure-yacht, and the cargo's dirty, but I'll pay ye in clean money.' Then, as a light fell full upon Tregavis, the skipper cried in astonishment, 'What in the name of Glory have we here?'

Tregavis was standing by the mast like a man dazed. He had refused all invitations to go below. The anguish of his position seemed to have numbed his faculties. He had no feeling for himself, no sense of satisfaction at his near escape from death; he thought only of his hopeless errand, and for the moment despair paralysed him. He looked almost abject in his misery—his thin hair and beard hung in wet wisps, his saturated black garments clung to his lean frame and gave him a spectral gauntness, and his woe-begone eyes, half-useless in the loss of his spectacles, blinked feebly at an alien world.

'Tis Mr Tregavis the chemist,' explained Johnny.

'Chemist!' roared the skipper. 'By Jeremy! this beats all! I never carried a chemist before. It's as good as a doctor; and, by all that's blue! Doctor we'll call him, and this smutty old tramp'll fancy herself a liner. Doctor Trigger-avis; that's the ticket! He shall have the key of the drug locker in the morning; and if any of ye feel poorly for want of exercise—he! he! he!—the doctor shall prescribe for ye in gallipot Latin.'

Tregavis swallowed a gulp of brandy that was pressed upon him, and instantly his energy revived, and his agony of mind found vent in a wild outburst—'The child, the poor child!'

'What child?' asked the bewildered captain. 'I understood ye were all aboard.'

Clutching the skipper by the arm, Tregavis poured into him the story of the night's errand and misadventure, and told it with such feverish emotion that it penetrated the husk of the callous, besotted mariner, and awakened the sympathy of the man.

'I'll give you fifty pounds, captain, if you'll land me at Polveen!'

The skipper shook his head. 'It can't be done; any minute the fog might drift down upon us again. It's too risky. Our berth is in the open Channel.'

'A hundred pounds, captain!' cried Tregavis frantically. It takes a long time to make a hundred pounds in a chemist's shop at Langissack, where every old woman is a compounder of panaceas.

'No, no; it can't be done. I'm mortal afraid of this ugly coast of yours; it's peppered a darned sight too freely on the wreck-chart. The

best I can do is to put back, and land ye at Falmouth to-morrow.'

To-morrow! To the mind of the chemist there was tragedy in the very word.

The steamer was now abreast of the light on Penzele, which gleamed steadily enough in the clearer night. Tregavis looked toward the light, and knew that behind the shoulder of the promontory lay the little village of Polveen in its sheltered cove. Even yet there might be time. Yes! there was still hope; and with hope the spirit of the man grew Titanic.

'Take me in as near as you dare, captain, and I'll swim ashore!'

The skipper looked at the man in amazed admiration. Then he turned to Roscorla and asked, 'Is there any depth o' water to the lee of the Point?'

'Oceans of water,' answered Johnny; 'fathoms and fathoms! I've seed a big ironclad hug the Point so close as courtin?'

The captain was sober enough now, and his manner was free of his jibing humour born of liquor. 'I'll risk it,' he cried heartily, 'though my plain duty in such dirty weather is to keep the open Channel. As for swimming—good Lord! no man could live in such water; and I reckon you've had enough for one night. I've an old boat I'll lend ye, and ye can send it along to Plymouth any time, and I'll pick it up, maybe, when we come back.'

The heart of Tregavis leapt at the words. 'God bless you, captain!' he cried; 'the money'—

'I'll be blistered if I touch a penny of your money,' said the skipper gruffly. 'Fisherman, stand by the helm.'

So Johnny Roscorla, knowing the coast, stood by the man at the wheel and piloted the big vessel. Meanwhile he was relieved of his wet clothes, and rubbed down, and invested with spare garments, dry but grimy; and his own sodden raiment was tied in a bundle. But Tregavis declined all such ministrations; he stood in the bow, staring ahead in the hope of seeing the light of the coastguard's boat; but there was nothing visible on the black water.

Captain Bunker, now fitly attired, paced the bridge with his mate, and grimly watched the weather. It still looked dirty enough to the windward, and the blur might at any moment encompass them. There was little risk in the open sea, but it was a vastly different matter between the ragged promontories of this indented coast in waters strewn with rocks.

'This is an awkward business,' said the skipper; 'it looks like a coroner's job, and I'm sorry for the poor fellow. I reckon a druggist's shop is as bad as a river full o' shipping; it's as simple as sin to give a wrong turn to the wheel or put your hand on the wrong bottle. Then, where's your certificate?'

The waves that had been perilous enough to the little *Gilliflower* washed impotently against the huge sides of the steamer, and as they rounded the Point the turbulence of the waters perceptibly diminished. They were soon to the leeward of Penzele, and in the shelter of that mighty headland the sea was comparatively calm. There was a twinkle of lights ahead, where Polveen nestled in its cove, but no sign of a boat.

The steamer stopped in deep water at the very foot of the cliff, which rose—a vast screen of granite—nearly perpendicularly from the sea.

'I'm sorry I can't set ye ashore,' said the captain warmly; 'but this is a death-trap of a place, and I'm anxious to get out of it.'

So they lowered the little boat—it was old and leaky—in the quiet water between the steamer and the wall of cliff, and the two men of Langissack clambered over the side.

'Send the boat round to Widdicombe's, Sutton Pool!' shouted the skipper as Roscorla took the oars. 'Good luck to ye!'

Then with a valedictory whistle, fierce and prolonged, that startled the Polveen folks and roused to shrill emulation a colony of sea-birds, the *Nautilus* steamed out into the Channel.

In twenty minutes Johnny Roscorla, who pulled desperately, brought the boat to Polveen beach; and before it touched the shingle Tregavis leapt waist-deep into the water and struggled ashore through the surf, his legs swathed in ribbons of seaweed.

He ran across the heavy sand, and took the path up the cliff, dimly marked at intervals by chunks of whitened granite; and before him, on the brow of the hill, he could vaguely see against the sky the coastguard cottage, with a light in an upper window.

In the little chamber Richard Curtis, the coastguard's man, stood with his wife by the bedside of their sick child—a delicate, bright-eyed girl of five, with a pathetic cough.

'Come, my beauty!' he cried cheerily, 'an' take thy med'cine like a little woman. 'Tis brave physic'—he held the phial of amber liquid to the lamp—'look, 'tis just like sherry wine, an' it smelleth—good!' He put the bottle to his nose, but the muscles of his face belied his words. 'What doth it say? "Shaake the bottle." Aw, iss; that explains it. I thought the weather had gone mazed, round the Point; but I b'lieve 'twas only shaakin' the bottle! What do 'ee think father hath for 'ee in the pocket of his greatcoat? 'Tis the queerest little image of a merryman that ivver thee seed. I bought 'en for 'ee to Langissack; an' when you pull the coord the legs of 'en jerkies so nat'ral as life. Hast thee got a nub o' sugar ready for her, mother?'

He took a wine-glass, and, with his broad thumb on the ridge of the marked bottle, he began carefully to measure out the pungent liquid, when

there was a heavy stumbling step upon the stair, and into the room burst a tall man, drenched, dishevelled, with terror in his face! With an inarticulate cry he crossed the chamber and grasped the arm of the petrified Curtis, and from the upturned bottle the liquid gurgled out upon the floor, filling the room with a strange odour.

Not a word was spoken, for Tregavis was beyond speech; but Curtis recognised the chemist, and something of the truth flashed upon his mind.

Then a spasm of agony contorted the face of

Tregavis; he clutched with convulsed fingers at the region of his heart, and fell forward upon the floor.

Richard Curtis, with a gasp of horror, bent over the fallen man, and the bewildered wife knelt beside him in helpless solicitude. They raised his head, and Tregavis gave a great sigh, and from his white lips came inaudible words that doubtless were 'Thank God!' Then the drawn features of the man relaxed into something like a smile—a smile of achievement.

The chemist was dead.

THE TRUE ENGLISH DEATH-RATE.

By ALFRED J. H. CRESPI, Wimborne, formerly Editor of the *Sanitary Review*.



At the annual meeting of the British Medical Association, at Clifton, in 1894, Sir Charles Cameron, the distinguished Medical Officer of Health for Dublin, in an address on Public Medicine remarkable for its clearness and vigour, handled, *inter alia*, the 'True English Death-rate for 1893,' a year conspicuous for bright skies and deficient rainfall. Sir Charles went very fully into some of the local causes raising or lowering the mortality. There died in England and Wales 19,170 persons per million—a rate comparing very favourably with that of a generation earlier, and perhaps lower than any other large, densely-peopled country can show; still a far higher rate than ought to satisfy us in our present state of knowledge. In the thirty-three very large towns of England and Wales, those with 100,000 and above, the deaths were per million 21,570; but when these towns were excluded, the rate in England and Wales fell to 17,900. The towns of the first order, be it noted, have a higher percentage of young people and of women than the country at large. Now, as women live considerably longer than men, and young people die (equal numbers being compared) in smaller proportion than older ones, important corrections must be made to ascertain the real death-rate of the great towns. When these corrections are made, the true death-rate in these thirty-three great towns is 23·32 per thousand, while in the rest of the country it is only 17·62; hence the mortality-rate of the great towns is 5·7 per thousand above that of the rest of the country. The difference between the lowest rural and the highest urban rate is absolutely enormous, and Liverpool shows an excess of 13·17 per thousand; indeed in that city there actually died in 1893 twice as many persons per thousand as in many other parts of England. In the outer ring of London, with a population of 1,543,296, the death-rate was only 15·4, and in certain metropolitan areas, like Hampstead, it was under 11, little more than one-third the Liverpool rate.

Life in towns can never be so healthy as in the open country—when, that is, there is a sufficiency of food, clothing, and shelter in the latter. The aggregation of many people on a limited area means bad air, greater liability to catch infectious disease, and less repose—the last a more important factor in the causation of ill-health than is generally supposed. The ceaseless roar of the traffic of London interferes with sleep and rest, and undoubtedly increases the liability to nervous ailments, and often leads to a premature breakdown. Nor can it be denied that the indigent, profligate, and degraded have a singular tendency to gravitate to the large towns. Now, these classes marry early, and are appallingly prolific. 'The poorer a man,' says Sir Charles, 'the more likely is he to marry, and it is a remarkable but undesirable fact that a man's desire for matrimony is in inverse ratio to his ability to maintain a family.' This is too well known to need any illustration.

In country villages there may be poverty, overcrowding, vice, and precarious employment; but there is better air, so that the pestiferous atmosphere of a great town slum is rarely found in a rural cottage. So notorious is it that the death-rate is lower among the well-to-do than Mr Sergeant, in a paper in the June issue of the *Journal of the Statistical Society* for 1864, argued that in any comparison between the death-rates of London and of Birmingham, an allowance of 1·5 per thousand should be given the latter to make up for the greater poverty of many of its inhabitants as compared with those of London generally.

There is hardly a surer test of the prosperity of a town than the number of domestic servants kept in it. Croydon had the lowest death-rate in 1893 of all the great towns—that is, those with at least 100,000 inhabitants; its corrected death-rate was 16·99. Now, it had, curiously enough, almost the highest percentage of servants—88 per thousand, or in the ratio of 4·4 per cent. to the heads of families. Bath and Hastings head the

sixty-two largest towns—those with a population between 50,000 and 100,000—in the number of their domestic servants, the former having 114 per thousand and the latter 111, while their respective birth-rates were, in 1893, 19·5 and 19·3, the death-rate being again 18·5 and 14·27 respectively; the large number of rich, elderly retired people in both those towns, but more particularly in Bath, accounting for a mortality heavier than one would look for in a health-resort.

In many manufacturing towns of the North the low percentage of servants is noteworthy: Liverpool has only 3·9, Manchester 3·1, Newcastle 4·7, Leeds 2·8, Sheffield 3·6, and Preston 2·4. Birmingham has 2·9 per cent. only. As a pendant to this, Dr Alfred Hill, the City Medical Officer of Health, recently told the magistrates that the Midland Metropolis contains 10,000 houses unfit for human habitation. Aston Manor, an important and most populous part of the town, has only 2·2 per cent. of servants—a quarter the Croydon ratio. The South of England shows far greater prosperity. Bristol has 5·7, Brighton 9·0, Plymouth 5·1, Portsmouth 4·5, and Devonport 3·4 per cent.

Another test of the prosperity of a town might seem to be the number of rooms in a tenement; but, strange to say, Sir Charles Cameron does not consider this test of any special value. Plymouth, a fairly healthy town, has 24·4 per cent. of one-room tenements, and 27 of two; while in Preston, infamous for nearly the highest death-rate in all England, one-room tenements are only 5 per cent. Devonport, a reasonably healthy town, has the largest proportion of one-room tenements—25·2; whereas Hanley, with its perpetual canopy of black smoke, its grimy houses, and general air of misery and dirt, has only one in a thousand. In other words, Devonport has two hundred and fifty-two times as many one-room tenements per thousand. In London 18·4 per cent. of the dwellings are one-room tenements. Kensington, royal parish though it is, suffers from poverty and overcrowding, as the last census sufficiently showed. At that time there were herded together 13,000 persons in 6400 single-room and 26,000 in 7000 double-room tenements. The death-rate does not invariably seem to be materially affected by this state of things, but the moral condition of the poorer classes must be; and in no direction can sanitary and social reform find greater scope than in providing more rooms per family, and, still better, more cottages.

As there is no way of increasing the number of houses in the heart of our great towns, where every foot of land is occupied, nor would the sanitary condition be materially improved were more people packed on an acre, the only remedy is to enable the working-classes to get out into the suburbs, where land is cheaper, and where, therefore, there is a better chance of finding cheaper cottages. Every factory removed into the suburbs,

every great school, hospital, or other public institution taken away, means so much the more room left for the many people compelled to remain. That the difficulty of removing factories cannot in all cases be insuperable is shown by the removal, some years ago, of Cadbury Brothers' cocoa factory from Broad Street, Birmingham, to Bournville, five miles from New Street Station, and the still more recent removal of Burroughs, Welcome, & Co.'s cod-liver oil and compressed drug works from Bell Street, Wandsworth, to Dartford. No special inconvenience was incurred in either case, the principals assure me, while ample space was found for the factories; and the workpeople were enabled to get better air, more elbow-room, and cheaper houses. The Cadburys have done wonders to help their people to build and buy bright, roomy cottages, and quite a large town of pretty, charming villas and modern houses is springing up round Bournville; while at King's-Norton, a little farther out, hundreds of good cottages, often owned by their occupiers, are being built. The late Mr Montague Williams, Q.C., attached great importance to the removal of large factories into the country as a good means of lessening the overcrowding in great towns. Where work can be got, there the workers must congregate.

At Hanley, the local authorities refuse to allow one-room tenements to be put up. It is a manufacturing town, the largest in the Potteries, and not the least smoky and unprepossessing. Many of the trades carried on in it are admittedly unhealthy; but, in spite of these drawbacks, the death-rate in 1893 was only 20·2. Is not this in part due to the absence of one-room dwellings?

In the great Scotch towns one-room houses, as they are called, are much more common than in England, and they have warm defenders among intelligent Scotchmen, who claim for them, among other advantages, greater cheapness. In 1873 they reached 32·8 per cent. of the total; but fortunately, according to the English sanitarians' opinion, the percentage is falling, and one may hope the time is not far distant when all towns, except the very largest, will see their way to follow the good example of Hanley, and forbid the erection of places which cannot be called houses, and which must be responsible for much of the vice, misery, and degradation of the working-classes. One can imagine the burst of public indignation were any of the great landowners of the South of England to sanction the building of one-room tenements on their estates. As it is, agitators sometimes allege that country cottages with three rooms should be closed as morally and hygienically objectionable, and yet in large towns there may be 20 per cent. of one-room dwellings and no constant supply of fresh air, as in the open country.

Dr Russell, of Glasgow, stated that in 1885 the death-rate of that huge city stood at 25; but in the one-room dwellings it was 27, in the two-

room 26, in the three-room 20, and it fell to 18 in the four-room. It is asserted, too, that in Berlin, in 1885, there were only 75,000 people out of 1,315,000 living in one-room dwellings, but that—*incredibile dictu*—the former furnished half the deaths in that city. The statement is astounding, and surely needs confirmation; but, as it is accepted by Sir Charles Cameron—a most cautious and accurate statistician—one must assume that it is not absolutely impossible. After all, it is not merely the overcrowding in the poor tenements which accounts for the high death-rate among their occupiers. The poorest, most vicious, incapable, and unhealthy gravitate to the worst slums of our large towns. In other words, dwellers in the slums will always be the shortest lived and the most unhealthy and worthless, because they also are the poorest, most vicious, and least capable; and the great capitals of the world are unfortunate in attracting a large percentage of all these outcasts.

It is often contended that good class and sanitariously perfect cottage accommodation cannot be made to pay a reasonable return on the outlay. Sir Charles Cameron—and who can speak with greater authority?—tells us that in Dublin the Corporation has provided two-room tenements, with separate sanitary accommodation of the most modern kind, at two shillings a week, and this with no loss to the city treasury; in other words, the investment is sound, if not exactly profitable. But other authorities are now maintaining that these low rents do not pay any interest on capital.

According to Dr Hope, Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool, in the July part of *Public Health* for 1894, five hundred and seventy-eight houses were about to be demolished in that ill-omened city. These houses were filthy, dangerous, and falling to pieces. In the three streets in which they were situated the death-rates were respectively 63, 67, and 71 per thousand. What other proof is needed of the dependence of ill-health on bad house-accommodation? We began by saying that no other country showed such a low death-rate as England; in none, too, is the general standard of living higher, and in none are the comforts of life greater. So far so good; and yet we only seem to have begun the great work of sanitary reform as far as many of the poor are concerned. When, fifty years hence, every working-class family is decently housed, clothed, and fed, it is probable that the death-rate will not exceed eleven per thousand for the whole country. What a triumph that will be—an annual saving on the figures of last year of full six lives per thousand inhabitants.

Dr Tatham, the Superintendent of Statistics, in a paper on 'Changes in the Death-rates of England and Wales' in the supplement to the Registrar-General's Fifty-ninth Annual Report, 1895, has the following statements, which I have freely abridged.

Dr Tatham points out that in the decennium 1871-80 there was a mortality of 21·27 from all causes per thousand of the population. In the next ten years the mean annual rate fell to 19·08. This decline in the mortality at all ages was shared by both sexes in almost equal proportion; the rate among males falling 10·6 per cent. and that among females 10·0. The figures show a decreased mortality among females at every one of the age-groups into which the span of life has been divided for the purposes of the Registrar-General, and among males a decrease at all except the age-group sixty-five to seventy-five years. The experience of 1881-90, although agreeing in the main with that of the preceding decennium in showing a greater reduction of mortality at the earlier ages, differs from it in other important respects. For example, Dr Ogle, commenting in the previous decennial supplement on the varying incidence of mortality at different ages, showed that, while the rates had fallen at the earlier part of life, they had risen at the later. This was not the case in the decennium 1881-90, where a decrease was observed in both sexes at every age-group save one. Again, compared with the mortality in the preceding decennium, the rate among females in 1871-80 was found to have decreased more rapidly than among males; this inequality has now been redressed, for in 1881-90 the male rate actually decreased faster than the female. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two sets of figures lies in the fact that, whereas in 1871-80 there had been a considerable rise in the male mortality after the age of forty-five and in the female mortality after fifty-five, recent figures show that this rise has been almost completely stopped, the only rise of mortality, in the whole course of life, during 1881-90 having been the trivial one of less than 1 per cent. at the age-group sixty-five to sixty-seven among males.

In the last decennium, 1881-90, the mortality among infants under one, generally adopted as the most sensitive test of the health of a community, has declined. The rate of mortality among infants of both sexes under the age of twelve months was equal to 142 per thousand births registered, compared with 149 per thousand in the preceding decennium. In 1881-90 the infantile rate among males was 155 per thousand births, and among females 128 per thousand, the rates in 1871-80 having been 163 and 134 respectively. A considerable proportion of the diminution in the death-rate since 1870 is the direct result of 'improved sanitation;' but that the whole difference between the rates of the two most recent decennia cannot thus be accounted for is obvious. The published returns show that the birth-rate of England and Wales has in recent years been steadily decreasing. As recently as 1878 the birth-rate was 35·6 per thousand; since then the fall has been steady, and the rate at the end of

the last decennium did not exceed 30·2, and it is considerably lower now, and is still falling. It is obvious that this change in the birth-rate, continued as it has been for so many years, must affect the age constitution of the population; and, as the death-rate at different ages varies enormously, the aggregate rate of mortality must accordingly be modified. On comparing the mean age-distribution of the population in the decennia ending respectively in 1880 and 1890, it will be seen that the numbers both of males and females living between the ages of ten and forty-five years were respectively greater in 1881-90 than in the previous decennium. Sanitary conditions remaining unchanged, the effect of this variation in the age constitution of the population would reduce the mortality at all ages, and that this

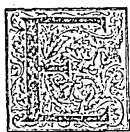
has actually been the case may easily be shown. The *crude* or *uncorrected* death-rate at all ages in the decennium 1871-80 was 21·27 per thousand; but if the number of persons living in the several age-groups during that decennium had been in the same proportion as in 1881-90, the death-rate in the earlier decennium would have been, not 21·27 per thousand but 20·84. It is, therefore, the latter figure, not the former, that should be used for the purpose of showing the actual decrease in the death-rate since 1880.

Before the sanitary reformer there lies a great future; and one can say that, in spite of the hurry and turmoil of modern human life, the embittered competition—the unrest, in short—the prosperity of the United Kingdom is increasing, and premature deaths becoming rarer every year.

A DEMOCRATIC DECREE.

By ADAM R. THOMSON.

I.



XACTLY at noon on the day before that fixed for the marriage of Queen Theresa of Nerumbia to her second cousin, Ernest, Hereditary Prince of Landberg, Captain Klunst, the chief of police of the capital city of Rosenstadt, was ushered into the private apartment of Count von Schönstein, the Queen's Principal Minister of State. He had come to Schönstein's residence in the Birnenstrasse by appointment; and the Count, though his furrowed countenance wore a look of deep gloom, received him graciously, and motioned him to a chair. Klunst sat down in silence, and waited with some impatience till the Minister, having carefully tied the papers on the table in front of him into a neat bundle, at length commenced the conversation.

'Well. I have seen the Queen,' he began in a low tone.

'Yes, your Lordship?'

'And it is useless trying to move her, worse than useless. She has thoroughly made up her mind, and is even prepared to accept my resignation if I persist in my refusal to have the monstrous decree I spoke to you about yesterday in readiness for her signature immediately after to-morrow's ceremony.'

'But,' said the other, 'it is madness—sheer madness.'

'So I represented to Her Majesty, Klunst, though not of course in those words. I pointed out that many of the prisoners she is so anxious to release are members of secret revolutionary societies—men and women who aim at the subversion of the constitution and the overthrow of the throne, whose freedom would even place Her Majesty in personal danger.'

'It is true, my Lord.'

The Count shrugged his shoulders. 'The Queen thinks not,' he said grimly.

'But what arguments did Her Majesty put forward?'

'None. She is a woman, and she does not argue. It almost makes one wish Nerumbia had adopted the Salic Law. I'll tell you what she did say, though. She hinted that my ideas are old-fashioned, and stated pretty plainly that, in her opinion, most of our political prisoners, as she pleases to call them, are the victims of police plots.'

'Monstrous!'

'Just so.'

'How can Her Majesty entertain such a notion?'

'I don't know, unless it is that she has been reading some of the French newspapers. But the origin of the evil is of no consequence. She dismissed me with an instruction to draft the decree, and to commence it with a preamble to the effect that Queen Theresa is—is—really I can hardly bring myself to speak the terrible words—is determined that her marriage shall inaugurate a new era.'

'A new era?'

'Yes, an era of—mark this, Klunst—absolute liberty to every one of her subjects.'

'Absolute liberty—in Nerumbia!' The captain laughed ironically.

Schönstein leaned back in his chair. 'I have explained the situation,' he said, 'and so far as I can see only a miracle can avert us from disaster.'

'Ah!' Klunst drew a long breath, then he remarked slowly: 'I have something startling to reveal to you, my Lord Count—something that perhaps—though not a miracle—may, after all, lead Her Majesty to reconsider the position.'

'What do you mean?' asked the Minister eagerly.

'I mean, your Lordship, that we have discovered the existence of the most diabolical plot ever conceived.'

'Yes, yes. What is it? Speak man—speak.' Schönstein half rose in his excitement.

'It is a plot to murder'—

'Not the Queen?'

'No; but the Prince, the bridegroom, to-morrow.'

'The Prince. Good heavens! Where? How?'

'In the Cathedral at the commencement of the marriage service.'

II.

'Details,' said Schönstein, after a brief, intense pause; 'details.'

Klunst bowed. 'They are precise, my Lord. Among those who have been given passes into the Cathedral is a certain Duchesse de Malville, who is supposed to be a member of the French nobility.'

'Yes; I recollect the name. She obtained her ticket through one of Her Majesty's ladies-in-waiting.'

'Whom we need not speak of, your Lordship, for she is merely an innocent dupe. She knows nothing of the supposed Duchesse's true character and antecedents.'

'You, Klunst, are better informed?'

'Yes,' said the other simply. 'This woman, whose real name is Adèle Léront, is an anarchist of the most dangerous type, young, fascinating, and—worst of all—sincere. She is utterly careless of her life, and is no doubt gratified at having been chosen by her fellows for the deadly work projected for to-morrow.'

'When was she so chosen, Klunst?'

'At a meeting held last night, a meeting at which the police were represented. The scheme of the crime was then discussed; and, to put the matter shortly, it was decided that as the wedding party walked up the central aisle, the woman should spring forward and stab Prince Ernest to the heart.'

The Count received all these particulars with the utmost calmness, giving no further sign of emotion than an occasional bite of his iron-gray moustache. Now he merely asked meditatively:

'Why should they wish to assassinate the Prince rather than the Queen?'

'I cannot say, your Lordship, unless it is that the clothes worn by a man afford less protection to the heart than those of a woman. Or it may be that they think an attack on the Prince is less likely to be anticipated than one on the Queen.'

'Ah! well; in any case the effect would be the same. Theirs is of course an international organisation, and it is only the rank of the victim they care about. The Prince is a ruler of a larger

country than ours, and his murder could not fail to terrorise Europe. But, now, what do you propose to do?'

'To arrest this woman, my Lord.'

'And on what evidence?'

'The evidence of my officer; Sauber his name is. He obtained admission to the meeting disguised as a'—

'Never mind that, Klunst; I am quite aware of your methods. But have you no other witnesses?'

'No; though we can trace this woman's history for some years past, and prove that she has been in the habit of expressing the most revolutionary opinions.'

Schönstein was silent for a moment. Then he said decisively:

'The case is not strong enough.'

'Not strong enough, your Lordship?' The captain looked surprised. 'Why, any court'—

'Not strong enough for the Queen, I mean. She will simply believe the whole affair to be an invention of the police; and so far from abandoning her projected folly, will actually glory the more in its accomplishment. I know Her Majesty's disposition, Klunst.'

'What is to be done, then?'

'At present, so far as you are concerned, nothing—absolutely nothing.'

'I must not proceed with the arrest?'

'Certainly not.'

'But, my Lord'—

'I have no time for further discussion,' interrupted the Count. 'I wish to be alone now. I have much to occupy me. You have my instructions; if I find it necessary to vary them you shall be duly notified.'

With which he rose, and Captain Klunst, mystified and not a little annoyed, had no course but to take his departure.

III.

Left to himself, Count von Schönstein sat for several minutes trying to arrive at a solution of the most difficult problem with which he had ever been confronted. This was, briefly, how to utilise the plot revealed by the chief of police in such a way as to overrule the headstrong will of the young Queen. To arrest the would-be assassin, and endeavour to convict her on police evidence would, as he had at once seen and explained to Klunst, in all probability produce an exactly contrary effect on Her Majesty's mind to that he desired. What other action, then, could he take? For once the Minister felt nonplussed; he could not find an answer to the question. And yet on his finding an answer depended his future career, for he had taken up such a definite position in the matter of the suggested amnesty that he would be bound, should this be carried out, to resign his office. He was a patriot according to his lights, and he honestly believed the Queen's

design both foolish and dangerous. But he was also a strong and ambitious man, who hated to be thwarted, even by his royal mistress, and who could not contemplate with equanimity relinquishing the political power which was so dear to his soul.

What if he were to do nothing, beyond perhaps warning Prince Ernest at the last moment of his danger, and affording him police protection? If the Queen saw the man she loved actually attacked, and at such a time, she could hardly fail to experience an overwhelming revulsion of feeling. But the Count, daring as he was, hesitated to take a course fraught with so much risk, more especially as he liked Prince Ernest, and believed that later on, when love's first frenzy had somewhat abated, he would find in the Prince a powerful ally in opposing the democratic tendencies of Queen Theresa. No, no, the Prince's life must not be endangered.

He had come to this inevitable conclusion when his private secretary entered from an adjoining room, placed a budget of letters on the table, and retired. Schönstein opened one, two, three of these communications, and glanced at their contents without interest. Out of the fourth, however, fell a photograph, and he took it up with a half-start. It was not accompanied by any note, but was signed, 'Very truly yours, Arnold Farrington.' 'A remarkable resemblance,' murmured the Count, 'really remarkable.' He struck a small bell which stood on the table, and his secretary re-entered the room. The Count handed him the photograph, and began abruptly:

'Farrington, the leading actor in that English theatrical company which has been in Rosenstadt for the last fortnight, has sent me his photograph, Müller. You've seen him, of course?'

'I have, my Lord.'

'Good—isn't it?'

'Exceedingly.'

'Did it ever strike you, Müller'—there was a hardly perceptible tremor in Schönstein's voice—'that Farrington is extremely like some one we both know very well.'

The secretary looked at the photograph carefully for a few moments, saying at last:

'Well, my Lord, I never noticed it before; but I think you must refer to Prince Ernest.'

'Yes, yes; not only are the two astonishingly alike, but they are of the same height and build. I wonder now'—he broke off abruptly—'when do these English actors leave us, Müller—do you know?'

'Their last performance is fixed for to-morrow evening, my Lord.'

'Ah! Well, Müller, I was present at the play they gave two nights since, and at its conclusion I sent for Mr Farrington and complimented him on his acting. It is, no doubt, in consequence of that interview that he has honoured me with his photograph. I should like to thank him for his

courtesy personally. Perhaps, too, I may give him some little souvenir—actors, I have heard, are fond of souvenirs; but, in any case, I want you to send a note to him—you can easily find out where he is stopping—and ask him to come here and see me after lunch, say at three o'clock. Let the note go at once by special messenger.'

Herr Müller bowed and left the room. The Count threw himself back in his chair, drew a deep breath, gave a low whistle, and muttered slowly to himself: 'At last I think I see a way, dangerous and difficult, too, not to say terribly expensive; but still a way. If only this English actor has sufficient pluck and impudence—and his countrymen generally are lacking in neither of these characteristics—then I—I believe I can give Her Majesty an object-lesson she will never forget, and at the same time save both Nerumbia and myself.'

IV.

That afternoon, probably for the first time in his life, Arnold Farrington was positively astounded. The Count made him a proposal so extraordinary that, but for the heavy monetary bribe with which it was accompanied, the actor would have esteemed the matter a huge joke. As it was, he hesitated, and raised one objection after another, to each of which, however, the Minister was ready with an answer. The upshot was that, having satisfied Schönstein, he left, taking with him, with many misgivings, a portrait of Prince Ernest of Landberg, a ribbon of the Order of the Gray Eagle, and a draft for a large sum on the Secret Service account of the Nerumbian treasury. Whatever happened, he could at least congratulate himself on having obtained payment in advance.

A little later Von Schönstein and the chief of police were again in conference.

'Klunst,' said the former, commencing the conversation, 'before we go any further, I want to be assured that what you told me this morning of the intended assassination of the Prince is absolutely true.'

'That is so, my Lord. I have questioned and cross-questioned my officer, and he is ready to swear to the accuracy of the most minute detail of his story.'

'There is no doubt, for instance, that the attack is planned to take place during the procession of the wedding-party up the aisle at the beginning of the service?'

'None whatever; on that point, as on all others, Sauber is quite positive.'

'Good! Then I have arranged this affair at last.'

'I am to arrest the Duchesse?'

'No, no; I told you before how futile such a step would be. Come, you shall hear everything; but, by heaven! Klunst, should a word ever pass your lips'—

'You may rely upon my discretion, my Lord.'

'Well, I suppose I may, especially since your interests, as well as mine, are involved. Let the Queen have her way, and unloose this disreputable horde of criminals, and there can be little doubt that, provided she is not meanwhile assassinated, her next step will be to abolish the police, which would abolish you, Captain Klunst.' The Count smiled grimly, and went on without waiting for a reply: 'On the other hand, let the Frenchwoman's attack be duly made, and Her Majesty dare not, simply dare not, outrage public opinion and—and my opinion—by proceeding with her ridiculous decree.'

'But I—I do not understand, my Lord. You cannot mean that we are to allow the attack to be made?'

'I do, though, Klunst.'

'I am lost in perplexity, your Lordship. Have you consulted Prince Ernest about this? Is he ready to take the risk?'

Schönstein twirled his moustache; he was quite enjoying the mystification of the chief of police.

'No,' he said slowly, 'I have not consulted the Prince, nor at this stage do I propose to do so. It is quite unnecessary.'

'Unnecessary?' The word came involuntarily from the captain's lips.

'Entirely. The Prince will not be exposed to any Klunst's fatever.'

Klunst's face was a study; but he said nothing.

'Simply because,' the Count resumed, 'the attack will not be made on him at all.'

The chief of police fidgeted nervously in his chair, but speech was still beyond his powers.

'It will be made,' said the other, in a low voice, 'on a gentleman who has agreed to enact the part of bridegroom for the passage up the aisle only—Mr Arnold Farrington, the great English actor, who is visiting us just now.'

He paused, and at last Klunst managed by a gesture to signify his desire for further information. The Count was quite ready to gratify him.

'Briefly,' he explained, 'this is how matters stand: It has been arranged, as you know, that Prince Ernest is to wear to-morrow the uniform of a Captain of Hussars, with one decoration only, the ribbon of the Order of the Gray Eagle. Well, Farrington has in his theatrical wardrobe the requisite uniform, and I have lent him my decoration. Farrington bears a strong resemblance to the Prince, and, with a little make-up, it would be next to impossible in the dim light of the Cathedral to distinguish between the two men. You follow so far?'

'Ye—es,' gasped Klunst.

'H'm! It has also been arranged that Prince Ernest is to await the Queen immediately inside the great door at the west end of the Cathedral, when, after kissing his bride's hand, he, with the rest of the party, will at once move up the aisle. This part of the programme, however, the Prince will carry out by deputy, for his carriage—you

know he and I are to proceed to the Cathedral together—his carriage will be unavoidably delayed.'

The chief of police wiped his moist brow. 'But, my Lord,' he murmured, 'if this Englishman should be killed?'

'There is no fear of that. He is going to wear a coat of mail underneath his uniform. The only risk he runs is the really slight one of detection, for which he has been well paid. But now, Klunst, I wish you to note carefully your share in this transaction. First of all, the so-called Duchesse must be watched, and should she by any chance leave the city, the fact must be at once communicated to me.'

The captain bowed assent. 'Her movements are under observation,' he remarked.

'Now for yourself, then. You will post several officers in plain clothes near the central aisle of the Cathedral, and will, of course, be yourself among them. The moment the attack is made, Farrington will fall, and it will then be for you and those of your men who are not engaged in arresting the woman, to surround him before the Queen has time to intervene, and carry him quickly to the vestry at the south of the altar. There you must immediately get rid of the men, and an instant later the Prince and I will join you. The Prince, whom I shall have meanwhile taken into my confidence, will then himself go into the Cathedral, explain to the Queen in a hurried whisper that he was not wounded, but had merely fainted with excitement, and the interrupted ceremony will be proceeded with. So shall we save Nerumbia.'

'Your instructions are difficult to give effect to, my Lord,' said the chief of police, gazing at Schönstein admiringly; 'but I will do my best.'

'Till we meet to-morrow, then, Captain Klunst, farewell.'

'Farewell, my lord Count—till to-morrow.'

'We are to commence a new era then, you know,' added the Minister, with a laugh, as the other rose to go.

'Ha! ha! a new era!' echoed Klunst, closing the door behind him.

V.

It was the season of winter, and the next day proved cold and gloomy. Nevertheless, long before the hour of one, at which the wedding was to take place, the streets of Rosenstadt were gaily decorated with flags and bunting, and were thronged with crowds of merry-faced citizens who had turned out to do honour to the occasion. Arnold Farrington noted all this as he lay back among the cushions of a closed carriage, listening dreamily to the pealing bells, and wishing his adventure well over. It had been the publicly expressed desire of the Prince of Landberg to be permitted to proceed to the Cathedral quietly, so that Farrington was not worried by any inconvenient demonstrations *en route*. Arrived at his

destination, however, he grew somewhat anxious, for here he had to encounter the Burgomaster, explain that the Count von Schönstein had been detained for a few minutes, and submit to be escorted up the stone steps of the Cathedral, and so through the great door to the spot at which he was to await the coming of the Queen. He dismounted from the vehicle, and his fears were immediately set at rest. The hours he had devoted to his make-up had brought their reward; the obsequious officials who stood bowing before him had evidently not the slightest doubt as to his identity with the Prince. He entered the Cathedral just three minutes before one; and, as he gazed at the richly-dressed personages who thronged the vast nave, speculated calmly as to the precise position of the woman who was to attack him.

On the stroke of the hour, cheers from without announced the advent of the young monarch, and at the same moment the Count and the Prince of Landberg alighted unobserved at a small door at the other end of the building. Schönstein's only ground for uneasiness was over; he had told his story to the Prince in such a way as to gain His Serene Highness's assent to the steps taken for his safety, and for Nerumbia's safety, and for the safety of the Count. Together they entered an unoccupied vestry, and awaited events with confidence.

The mighty organ pealed forth; the procession must have started up the aisle. Another moment and—unemotional man as he was—the Count's heart began to beat wildly. If the deed should cause a panic? But no, no; Klunst was a reliable officer; he would prevent anything of that sort!

Some seconds passed; but nothing seemed to have happened. Then the organ ceased, and the two men in the vestry distinctly heard the resonant voice of the Archbishop beginning the marriage service.

Schönstein's brow grew moist, his lips parched; he had comprehended the terrible truth. The attack had not been made. The passage up the aisle had been accomplished in safety! He could find no words in which to reply to the dismayed look of inquiry cast upon him by the astonished Prince.

There was a noise at the outer door, and Captain Klunst, his face blanched, his limbs trembling, stood before them.

'My lord Count,' he panted, 'what is to be done? This woman Lèront, this anarchist, has failed us. She is not in the Cathedral.' He paused for breath.

'Go on,' muttered Schönstein feebly. 'She has escaped?'

'No, no; her lodging was too carefully watched for that to happen. But she must have found out

that we were watching her. She has simply kept indoors. That is all.'

'All!' echoed the Count.

'All!' cried the Prince excitedly. 'It is not all. Why—why, good heavens, Count!—while we three are standing here, Theresa—the Queen—my Queen—is—is being married to an English actor!'

The Count groaned; but could offer no suggestion. He and Klunst looked at one another blankly. The tension was becoming unbearable.

'Fire! Fire! Fire!'

The cry came from within the Cathedral, and was followed by a stampede, and the shouts of the excited people rushing for the great west door of the building. Another moment, and into the vestry burst the man who had raised the alarm—Mr Arnold Farrington.

'I—I had to do it,' he gasped, addressing the Count. 'Why, they were actually marrying me to the Queen, and I—I have a wife in England. There is nothing like a cry of fire to clear a place quickly; and, goodness knows, in this suit of mail I was hot enough to do the thing realistically. No one will be hurt, the exits are too good. By Jupiter!' he added, 'here comes Her Majesty!'

For answer, the Count, who, in the presence of a pressing danger, had recovered himself, seized Farrington by the arm and hustled him out of the vestry into the street. His carriage was still waiting, and the two men jumped in.

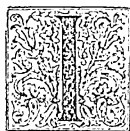
'I have failed to save Nerumbia,' said the Count hastily; 'but there is yet time to save myself.'

'And me, I hope,' remarked Farrington. 'I guess I'd better get away from this country of yours as soon as convenient, Count.'

'Like fury to the railway station,' cried Schönstein to the coachman.

Thus abruptly did the Count von Schönstein bring his political career to an end. A more pliant Minister was immediately appointed in his stead, who, at the conclusion of the deferred marriage-ceremony on the following day, presented for the Queen's signature a decree giving immediate liberty to all prisoners throughout the realm. Whether this will lead to the direful results anticipated by the Count time alone can show. It has since come to the knowledge of the chronicler of these events, however, that the Duchesse de Malville, *alias* Adèle Lèront, was allowed by the demoralised police to make good her escape, and also that at present Queen Theresa is well and happy. At the same time, there are said to be matters connected with Her Majesty's first attempt at matrimony as to which she in vain seeks enlightenment from her prudent and far-seeing spouse, Ernest, Hereditary Prince of Landberg.

'CLOSE CALLS' IN THE ROCKIES.



IN North-Western parlance a 'close call' means a narrow escape from some danger. Section-men—that is to say, the railroad navvies—on the Great Northern Railway in the Rocky Mountains often have exciting escapes from being run over by trains, from being crushed by rocks or falling trees, and from being buried under snow-slides.

There were four men on the western part of the 'Summit Section,' at the top of the Marias Pass, in the Rockies. The grade there was very steep, and there were also two or three small tunnels. It was difficult to tell of the approach of a train, owing to the crooked nature of the track and to the fact that a mountain river, the north fork of the Flathead, ran close to the rails, making a considerable noise by its pitching over rocks in a string of cascades and waterfalls. For these reasons we had several narrow escapes from being run over; but although we had orders to travel slowly on our hand-car (a flat car running on four wheels, and propelled by men standing on the car and alternately pulling and pushing a double-handled lever), we paid but little attention to orders if we were in a hurry; and often we would rattle down the mountain-side at the rate of thirty miles an hour, the car going by its own momentum, with one man standing on the brake as we rounded the curves. There was glorious sport in dashing down that mountain-track, through scenes of a grandeur which cannot be told, towering mountains on one side, a precipice and a roaring river on the other. Round the corners of rock-cuttings we would swing with a dash, fresh pictures leaping into view every moment.

The foreman, a burly Irishman, would suck at his dirty little black pipe, seemingly deaf and blind to all around him, but really keeping a sharp lookout ahead, and listening intently for sounds of trains. Often we would start out knowing that the passenger train was not far behind us, and then indeed we would have a wild, reckless run. And one day we came to grief.

We were at our old trick of running ahead of the passenger train, and merrily we bowled along. But we did not know that the passenger train had received orders to wait at a side-track, so that a fast 'special' coming from the west might have a clear track. Just as we came to tunnel No. 3, about one hundred yards long, we heard a whistle sounding from the west.

'My God, boys, there's an "extra" coming up the hill!' shouted the foreman.

We were at that moment dashing over a trestle bridge about sixty feet high; to jump safely was impossible. At the end of the bridge was the tunnel, and it was equally suicidal to think of jumping off while running through it. At the

other end of the tunnel there was a place where a daring man *might* not break his neck if he jumped off the car; but fast approaching that other end of the tunnel was the swift 'special.'

Unable to slacken our furious speed, we dashed into the tunnel, well knowing that we might meet death in that blackness. It seemed a terribly long tunnel, though we flashed through it in a few seconds of time; and right at the other end we met the 'special.' The last thing I remember seeing was the foreman, still holding the black pipe in his teeth, and staring in a dazed manner at the engine bearing down upon him. Then there was a crash. I suppose I must have jumped or been thrown to one side; I soon picked myself up, nothing the worse, except for a few bruises.

The 'special' stopped, and the superintendent of the road, who was on board, got down and began to make inquiries. 'Who was the foreman of this gang?' But the Irishman had been smashed into a horrible, unrecognisable mass. So too had another of the men, a genial, light-hearted Highlander. Poor chap! I used to write letters for him to a girl he loved, 'back east, in God's country.' The third man, a Norwegian, had both legs broken. Now, that was a 'close call' for me.

I used to think that the mountains frowned upon us for daring to bring into their domains the smoke and rattle of our miserable railway, for sometimes they would hurl monstrous boulders at our trains; and in these acts they would often show a cunning that seemed more than human. The track-walker, on the lookout for fallen rocks, would pass along the track a few minutes ahead of a train; and, as soon as he had turned a corner of the road, down would come a huge rock weighing several tons. Then messages would flash along the wires: 'Freight No. 15 in the ditch at Bad Rock Canyon. Broken rail caused by falling rock. Send wrecking crew.' But more than once it was the passenger train which was the object of the spite of the mountains. The engineer, leaning out of his cab window, would round a curve and see, a few yards ahead of him, a great block of stone resting wickedly on the track. Instinctively his hand would fly to the air-brake, he would shut off steam and let out sand (engineers seldom use the reverse lever in such cases); but crash into the rock the engine would go, rear up, roll over and over, snapping the trunks of the pine trees on its way into the river, some hundreds of feet below the track. Then the Chief Despatcher, sitting in his office at the end of the division, would hear the sounder click out the words: 'No. 2 ran into rock eight miles east of summit. Engine, baggage, mail-car, and day-coach ditched. Engineer, fireman, mail-clerk, and one passenger killed; several injured. Send wrecking outfit and doctors.'

And upon one occasion the special train, consisting of the Wrecker (a machine for raising overturned cars and picking up wrecks) and a coach with doctors and railroad officials, were steaming quickly to the scene of an accident when an evil-minded mountain threw a stone with such good aim that it struck the engine and toppled it over, and the wrecking crew, the doctors, and the railroad officials were piled up in a heap. Now, that mountain could have thrown stones at that place at any other time during any of the days in any of the centuries of years that had gone before, and probably no harm would have been done. But no! With a diabolical cunning he chose just the second of time in which he could do the most mischief.

Yet the snow-slides are even more to be dreaded than falling rocks. If you pass through the mountains in the summer-time you will notice broad pathways cleared through the forests on some mountain-side. These are the tracks of the snow-slides; for a snow-slide clears a way for itself, and cuts off trees in its path like a man shaving himself with a sharp razor.

On the 31st December 1892 the passenger train was stuck in a snowdrift at Bear Creek, in the heart of the mountains. A snow-plough, engine, and train-load of 'dagors' (Italian navvies) were despatched to the place, with orders to dig out the 'stalled' train. I went with the party, as the men on our section were also impressed into the work. But we could do little or nothing, and just before noon we started on our way to the section-house for dinner and to get reinforcements of men.

The train was backing down the hill—that is to say, the cars were being pushed by the engine. I was riding on the engine, sitting on the fireman's side of the cab, and talking to the fireman. The engineer pulled the whistle cord, as usual, just before rounding the curve on the side of Mount Donnington; and that whistle was probably the cause of the trouble which followed. Under certain conditions of snow, temperature, and atmosphere it takes very little persuasion to start a snow-slide. Perhaps it was our whistle which stirred the snow at the top of Mount Donnington, nearly a mile above us.

At first the loosened mass was a small one; but it rapidly gathered immense force and volume, and swept like a torrent, some hundred yards wide and sixty feet deep, bringing with it rocks and trees, down the mountain-side, straight towards us. The brakeman, who was standing on the top of a car, saw it coming, and gave a wild, inarticulate cry. We on the engine saw it; the engineer gave one glance, then threw the throttle wide open, putting on full steam in the hope of pushing his train past the worst of the slide, even though it were at the sacrifice of his own life. It was a brave deed, a noble deed; and by it he saved the lives of thirty men who were in

the car farthest removed from the engine. That car was overturned, it is true, but no one in it was seriously hurt. But the rest of the train?

A snow-slide travels with a terrible roaring, hissing quickness, and in an instant that great wall of snow was upon us. As though they had been toys, our train and engine were swept off the rails, turned over and over, and buried fifty feet deep in hard-packed snow. The fireman and I sat like dazed men and watched the slide coming at us, for we could do nothing. The front wave of the slide poured into the cab window, swept us through the window on the opposite side; and, incredible as it may sound, we were borne on the crest of that slide some three or four hundred feet into the river valley beneath the track.

I knew nothing from the moment the slide struck us until I saw the fireman, with a bleeding face, bending over me and trying to drag me out of the snow. We were badly cut by broken glass; I had also a scalded hand, caused, no doubt, by snatching at and breaking the water-gauge glass as I was being swept through the cab of the engine.

The engineer and four other men were killed by that fearful slide. Late that night, after much hard digging, their bodies were recovered, crushed out of all likeness to human beings. But the fireman and I were all right again in a week or so.

Now, two years later that same fireman fell downstairs in his own house, broke his neck, and died. Fell downstairs a few feet in a little, one-story wooden house, and died. Yet this man had ridden on a murdering avalanche. Queer—isn't it?

RECONCILIATION.

THE West glows softer and the breeze blows mild,
Each flower is nodding like a sleepy child.

I come to you, O Love! to make my prayer—
Let us be reconciled.

Say that the words we had to-day were wild,
Unmeaning, thoughtless, written in the air,
To be destroyed by dusk beyond repair.

Who was to blame? Must we go back to find
The grain we fought for? Nay; mine eyes are blind.

I swear all search is vain so late, my dear:
And I am quite resigned.

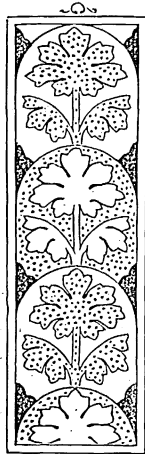
'Tis past!' the West declares; and in the wind
There breathes a sigh, 'Forget!' and I can hear
The flowerets lisp 'Forgive!' O Love, draw near.

We, who did quarrel on this summer day,
Are met together when its eve grows gray.

And surely, sweet, in this last little light
Your heart shall bid me stay.

I know we said 'good-bye,' and turned away
When all the world beneath the sun was bright...
But now, it seems, we cannot say 'good-night!'

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SALMON FOR FOOD AND SALMON FOR SPORT.

By AUGUSTUS GRIMBLE, Author of *Highland Sport*.

FOR the last ten years the supply of Scotch salmon has been steadily decreasing. What are the causes of this decay? What remedies are wanted not only to arrest it but to turn the falling off into a yearly increasing yield? The causes are quite clear: they are over-netting by too numerous bag-nets, the non-observance of the weekly close-time by very many of them, the poaching of scringers and steam-trawlers, badly-marked estuary lines, and absurdly-dated yearly close-times. These are the main points to be dealt with; but undoubtedly the large increase in the number of bag-nets is the prime cause of the decay.

Before going further, it may be well to define the difference between a 'bag' and a 'stake' or 'fly' net. In each the principle is the same: a net stretched taut from the shore, against which coasting fish will strike; and, in following it up to pass round it, they are guided into a box-shaped bag at the end, out of which they seldom find their way, although the opening by which they went in is, of course, always available. The stake or fly net is used in shallow water, and fixed to stakes driven into the ground; the bag-nets are used for deeper water, and are floating nets fixed to buoys moored to anchors. In some places they are used singly, in others they are put out one beyond the other seaward from the shore.

During the last thirty years the numbers of these nets—or 'fixed engines,' as they are also called—have been doubled, until now there are close on two thousand of them working on the whole of the Scotch coasts, of which about three-quarters are on the east and north coasts. They are by no means evenly distributed, as in certain parts long distances are to be met with in which there are no nets; but wherever experience has shown that salmon may be captured, there are the nets clustered together as thick as they well can be. In the hundred miles of coast between

Fife Ness and Peterhead there are fully nine hundred bag-nets at work, or one in less than every two hundred yards. Here, with a vengeance, is an example of the abuse of netting rights crying loudly for legal interference; and if that does not come shortly the jealousies of the rival tacksmen netting against each other will lead to a still further increase in even this enormous number. Nets which are worked between the mouths of two rivers running into the sea near to each other should be entirely done away with—as, for instance, those working on the three to four miles of sandy shore lying between the mouths of the Dee and the Don; for there can be no doubt that the presence of an unlimited number of bag-nets between the mouths of these two rivers is most unfair to the chartered rights of the river-owners.

On all the remote and inaccessible parts of the coasts the bulk of the bag-nets do not observe the weekly close-time; and, though the fact is well known to the Fishery Board, prosecutions are few and far between. 'Surprise' visits are occasionally made; but the carrying of them out is too often entrusted to the relations or friends of the men to be surprised, so a hint reaches the netters before the visit takes place, and of course everything is found in order. Give me a smooth sea and (so that the netters' plea of 'rough weather' may not be available) a fast steam-launch, and, starting at six o'clock on Saturday evening from a small port that shall be nameless, by six o'clock on the Monday morning following I would undertake to have detected from forty to a hundred bag-nets all fishing through the weekly close-time!

The Fishery Board Report of 1884 says on this subject: 'With regard to the non-observance of the weekly close-time by the bag-nets it ought to be stated that it is in some measure owing to the system by which the men who work the nets are paid. These men, besides their regular wages, are paid to a certain extent by results, and the more fish they catch the more money they receive. The natural and inevitable consequence of this

system is to induce and encourage breaches of the weekly close-time wherever any pretence for its non-observance can be founded on stress of weather, or where the district where the bag-nets are worked is so remote as to be seldom visited by the river watchers.' Though this report was issued fifteen years ago, the lawlessness has increased instead of decreased. One more case of illegal fishing can be mentioned that may serve as a warning to anglers. Some few years ago I stayed at a Highland hotel with a salmon river attached to it, let by the day, week, or month at a pretty stiff rate. For four days I fished it for one fish, in the meanwhile hardly seeing another. So, as the water and the time of year were both right, I gave up, as it happened, on a Saturday evening; and, not being able to depart on Sunday, I took a stroll of some six miles to the nearest bag-net station. The sea was like a mirror, but the whole of the nets—eight of them in all—were fishing just as if no such thing as a close-time existed. Returning to the hotel, I sent for the landlord and told him of the discovery, and put it to him that he was not acting fairly in advertising his river and inducing anglers to come and spend their money with him while he was probably well aware that the bag-nets habitually disregarded the weekly close-time, and were thus each week robbing his river of a certain number of fish. He admitted the justice of the complaint, but excused himself by saying I was the first gentleman who had found it out, and that he 'dared not interfere.' That river still continues to be advertised; and, as it once had a reputation, fresh anglers go to it each year, while the nets still continue to fish the whole of the weekly close-time!

I could multiply instances without end of this habitual law-breaking and disregard of the weekly close-time; and there are but few tacksman who have not been fined for the offence. Many of them complain that it is hard to make them responsible for the acts of their servants, whose unlawful operations have been carried out in defiance of the strictest orders to the contrary. They claim, in fact, an exemption from the law of *Qui facit per alium facit per se*, which governs all relations between master and man throughout the kingdom. What would the tacksman say if the servants of the railway company that carried their fish-boxes to Billingsgate stole their salmon *en route*? Would they be content if the railway company answered their just complaints by stating that such act of their servants was strictly against orders, and that, therefore, it was hard to hold them responsible? The two cases are on all-fours, and it is surprising that such a plea should have been seriously put forward.

To obtain convictions requires an altogether different method of going to work than is at present in use. The local water-bailiffs are nearly always friends or relations of the men they are

employed to watch; blood is thicker than water, and hence the rarity of prosecutions. I know of one case where two English bailiffs were put on a Scotch district; they were fearless men, strangers to all around, did their duty boldly, undeterred by threats; and in two seasons they effectually extinguished close-time fishing, as well as a good deal of poaching.

Personally I have always considered it would prevent all this illegal work if the owners of the netting-rights worked them for their own profit, instead of letting them for small rents, to be worked by outsiders, who make very large profits, amounting to sums which most proprietors would be glad to have in their own pockets. If they owned land farms that would pay them from sixty to a hundred per cent. profit on their outlay for working them, it is quite certain they would not let them for less than they were worth; but they seem to think water farms are too troublesome to manage, though they will undoubtedly yield the large profits I have named; and thus there are very few owners who work their own nets or realise what they lose by letting them. If owners netted for themselves the fact would be a guarantee that it would be done fairly—for owners are mostly gentlemen, and gentlemen are not poachers.

I will take now some nettings I know of on about twenty miles of coast, on which there are fish to be netted from the 11th of February, the opening day of the season. On this stretch of shore there are just fifty bag-nets—not evenly distributed, but bunched together thickly on the best fishing-grounds. These fifty nets are leased to a tacksman for £250 a year. Let us look at his other expenses, and try to make an approximate estimate of his profit or loss.

Each bag-net will cost him about £20. Every seven, often every five, of them will require a visiting boat costing £17. Each boat will want a crew of five men at £1, 2s. a week—the lowest estimate of wages; there will be ice to purchase, carriage to pay, fish-boxes to buy, and repairs of plant. Here we have as capital:

Fifty nets at £20	£1000	0	0
Seven boats at £17	119	0	0
Purchase of fish-boxes, anchors, &c.	131	0	0
	£1250	0	0

This is for a plant specially liable to be damaged and to wear out quickly; probably every three years it would require nearly entire renewing, so let us add £400 a year and call the capital £1650.

Next there are the working expenses. Probably the whole of the fifty nets would not be fished from the 11th of February. Say that but twenty-one nets are worked for the first eight weeks of the season, requiring three boats of five men each at £1, 2s. a week, or £132. At the end of the eight weeks the whole fifty nets would be put on for the remaining twenty weeks of the season, entailing

a further expenditure of £770, or a total of £902 for wages. To this add the cost of ice, railway freight, &c.—say £98; to which must be added £250 for rental.

So here is a capital of £1650 requiring an outlay of £1250 to work it. How is the tacksman to recover his outlay and make a profit?

Let us suppose that each net catches a fish a day during the season. Then, the twenty-one nets fishing for the first eight weeks will take 1008 fish; for the next twenty weeks the whole fifty will get 6000 more, or a total of 7008 fish, of an average weight of 10 lb.—equal to 70,080 lb., which will be sold at an average of 1s. 2d. per lb., and so realise £4088. Thus the tacksman will have paid all his expenses, recovered his outlay, have £400 in hand against depreciation of plant, and yet have a clear profit of £1188!

I have the best of reasons for saying this estimate is not very far out for the cost of working any fifty nets between Berwick-on-Tweed and Duncansby Head. If the cost of the plant has been slightly underestimated, the capture of fish per net per week has certainly been taken at less than it really is; at any rate, if I am anywhere nearly correct, here is a nice profit that owners might just as well put in their own pockets instead of handing it over to a tacksman.

To turn now to *messieurs les assassins*; the space at my disposal compels me to dismiss all the race of river gentry, from the shepherd who takes a single fish for his family dinner to the large and lawless gangs of night-poachers. The river-sneaks, however undesirable they may be, cannot, however, do one-hundredth part of the harm that is wrought by a crew of scringers, or a steam-trawler, or the poaching captain of a yacht. We will take the scringers first. Their homes and their hunting grounds are almost entirely on the west coast, the great numbers of burns and rivers running into the sea offering them opportunities which are lacking in the estuaries of the larger rivers and less indented coasts of the east of Scotland. Oban is notoriously the headquarters of the fraternity. From that town alone there are fully six boats of six men to each living entirely by poaching; to the north and south there are other minor resorts; and between these gangs the sea-trout are already nearly exterminated, while in due course the salmon will follow. The poachers use a herring or mackerel net with a deep bag, at times fishing from the shore in the usual method, at others fishing in deep waters, having the net between two boats, which make a wide sweep and then come together. They are a lawless, reckless lot, prepared to offer violence to any one, and keeping the lessees of the bag-net fishings at bay by threats of cutting their nets adrift if they interfere; and the evil has now got to such a pitch that only vigorous action and severer penalties can stamp it out. At Oban they openly land their fish and sell

it under price; and this continues for fully a month after the commencement of the annual close-time on the 26th of August.

There is not a single proprietor on the west coast who does not complain of this abominable poaching. Government interference seems to be hopeless, and no Scotch member of Parliament is apparently willing to take the matter up. The question then arises: Would it not well pay the whole of the west coast proprietors if they entered into a combination—say from the Inver River on the north to the Add on the south? On this stretch of coast there are fully a hundred rivers and burns that are being ruined, and quite fifty proprietors who are interested in them; if they would combine and subscribe, say, £25 each, there would be funds sufficient to hire for three months two fast steam-launches, provided with search-lights, and captained and manned properly. If two such boats were well handled they should not only make short work of the scringers, but would also be able to detect the greater part of the bag-nets fishing during the weekly close-time; while the proprietors would speedily recoup themselves by increased rents or increased sport. The steam-trawler poacher, I am glad to say, is already attracting the notice of Parliament. Why? Because the scringers themselves complain of their depredations to the gentlemen who represent them there!

There is another class of scringer meriting the most severe punishment—namely, the poaching skipper of a hired yacht. Every season large sums are made—as much as £300 one skipper owned to—by keeping the poached fish on ice and sending them to market as opportunity offers; and a yacht on a west coast trip presents this every two or three days.

The estuaries of most rivers have been made too small, and fixed entirely in favour of the nets, and never in the interests of the salmon or the rivers. Most of the estuary limits would be better for revision. The description of many of them is also very difficult to understand; here, for instance, is a common form of delineation. The estuary of the Findhorn reads as follows—and what could be more vague or more puzzling even to the oldest fisherman on the spot?—‘A line drawn due north from the outermost of the two shipping piers of the town of Findhorn as extends from high-water mark outwards to two hundred yards below low-water of equinoctial spring-tides; on the west a line parallel with and one and a half miles distant from the foregoing described line, and also extending outwards from high-water mark to two hundred yards below low-water of equinoctial spring-tides; and on the north a line of two hundred yards out from low-water of equinoctial spring-tides, and connecting the outer ends of the two lines hereinbefore described.’

It is equally hard to understand the close-times

fixed for some rivers. Take the Hope, for instance, which opens for the rod on the 11th of January, but in which no clean fish has ever been caught or even seen until the middle of June! There are also plenty of rivers which open on the 11th of February, and yet contain no clean fish till two or three months later. Why, then, should they be 'opened' by law so long before they are 'opened' by nature? Again, the Helmsdale opens for the rod on the 11th of January, but the Brora, only a few miles distant, cannot be fished till the 11th of February; and yet on the 11th of January there are probably more fresh-run fish in the latter river than in the former. It is discrepancies like these, which could be multiplied indefinitely, that show in what a slipshod and happy-go-lucky way our salmon-fishery laws have been framed.

Members of Parliament talk grandly about salmon as a 'food-supply.' What nonsense that is! A food supply means something that the masses can live on and enjoy at a price they can afford to pay. In February this year salmon was 5s. 6d. per lb.; at the end of May it was 3s. 6d.; and it is never less in price per lb. than the finest Southdown mutton. Food-supply, forsooth! How many working-men are there who can afford to buy salmon at even 10d. per lb.? To be worthy of the name, salmon should be sold at 1s. per lb. in February, and 4d. per lb. in May. This could be done—easily done—by legislation and proper protection; and, in spite of the cheapness, the owners of the rivers and the tacksmen would both make heavier profits than they do at present. The angling values would increase enormously, while the tacksman might have to work harder for a shorter time, but it would pay him much better to catch 100,000 fish of 10 lb. each and sell them at 3d. per lb. than to catch 10,000 fish of the same weight and sell them at 1s. per lb. To arrive at a millennium of this sort every available means must be used; and this brings us to the matter of hatcheries, and the question as to whether they really help.

There is some difference of opinion on this point; and in several instances the small returns obtained have set both proprietors, tacksmen, and anglers against them. Where, however, the return of fry to the river nearly equals the number of eggs taken from the fish, then surely it must in the long-run far exceed the yield of nature. Floods, frosts, and droughts are powerless to destroy the ova in a hatchery, which is also protected from the ravages of birds and fishes. Moreover, if the burn into which the fry are eventually turned be previously dammed back until the bed is nearly dry, and all trout and eels removed; and if it be further protected by netting (wire or other) from the overhead attacks of gulls, &c., then it can safely be asserted

that the artificial method will be much more productive than the natural one. Of course there must come a period when the fry have to be turned into the river, and once there they will have to take their chance with the naturally-hatched fry; and I have met with those who maintain that the artificially-reared fry are not so sharp as the natural fry in protecting themselves from the attacks of gulls, &c., and that these latter fry will instantly seek shelter under stones at the sight of a hovering gull, while the former do not recognise the enemy until too late.

Many hatcheries are kept up by private enterprise, as those of Lord Abinger, on the Spean; the Marquis of Ailsa's, at Culzean; the Marquis of Breadalbane's, at Taymouth; Lord Burton's, at Glen Quoich; Sir John Fowler's, at Braemore; Mr Pilkington's, at Sandside; the Duke of Richmond's, at Fochabers, from which 840,000 fry were turned into the Spey in 1898; and the Duke of Sutherland's, at Torrish, on the Helmsdale, which I had the advantage of seeing under the guidance of Mr Macfarlan and his keeper, Mackay, who superintends it. Other hatcheries are at Alness, Brora, Loch Buie, Conon Bridge, Dupplin, Durris, Howietoun, Stormontfield, Tongueland (on the Kirkcudbright Dee), and last, but not least, that of Mr Armistead, on the Solway. Some of these belong to the district fishery boards, as those of Dupplin and Durris; others, like those of Howietoun and Mr Armistead's, breed to sell. In the few places in which hatcheries have been abandoned, bad management has been the cause; but, as a rule, when once started they have been kept up on account of the benefits that were derived.

The following rivers have no hatcheries: Annan, Awe, Ayr, Cassley, Carron, Cree, Deveron, North Esk, South Esk, Findhorn, Forth, Ness, Nairn, Oykel, Shin; also, nearly all the small rivers of the west coast are in the same plight. Now, if there is any good at all in hatcheries, each river should certainly have one, if not two, attached to it, each capable of hatching out 500,000 ova; and the district boards should have power to order their erection and be able to provide for their cost and maintenance by a *pro rata* tax on every one deriving profit or pleasure from the river or its coast fishings. Of course, hatcheries of themselves will not do everything that is necessary to restore and improve to the utmost our salmon-fisheries, yet they will go a long way if backed up by better protection against poaching, by the prevention of netting during the weekly close-time, and by judicious alterations in some of the annual close-times and estuary lines. In my humble opinion, it is only parliamentary interference that will do these things, and effectually bring salmon-eating and salmon-catching within the reach of the multitude.

THE BEGGAR OF THE BLUE PAGODA.

By CARLTON DAVE.



It is often the unexpected that happens, so the unsuspected are invariably worthy of suspicion; and this unique theory was never better exemplified than in the case of Meng-Hi, or, as he was commonly called, the Beggar of the Blue Pagoda. This pagoda was an unpretentious one, which was fast falling to decay, and it stood on a little eminence to the north of the Great Wall. Once, no doubt, it was looked upon as the *fung-shui*, or good luck of the place; but of late it had lost its reputation, and the authorities had allowed it to fall into neglect. In its roofless upper stories the birds built their nests, while weeds and shrubs grew round and out of its dilapidated windows. It was said that these windows had once been painted blue, hence its name; but the woodwork was all weather-stained and rotten, and the whole structure presented a sad picture of dreariness and decay.

Many and many a time I had passed the pagoda, and always with a certain amount of interest; for rumour had been rife with its reputation, and it bore a name that was anything but honoured. Though the road that ran by it was much frequented through the day, at night the people gave it a wide berth. Most of them believed that it was haunted. Many had actually seen the presiding ghost, as it peered out at them from the ruined windows; others had heard cries as of men in agony. In fact, so vile had become the reputation of this particular pagoda that many of the people had petitioned the Government to have it demolished, a petition which was duly considered, and might have been acceded to had not the superstitious element been introduced into the controversy. If an evil spirit had taken up his abode in the pagoda, it were as well to leave him alone. There was no knowing what form his wrath might take if he were deprived of his habitation.

How I came to be associated with the Blue Pagoda, and of Meng the Beggar, I will set forth as succinctly as possible. Be it understood that I was a person of some official importance in Peking—what matters not; but, as I was seated in my office one day, a card was brought to me bearing the inscription of Tong-Che-Li. Tong was one of the most magnificent officials of the Tsung-li-Yamen, and as such I gave him an immediate audience. He entered, looking most dejected, and with a grave bow gave me salutation. I offered him a cigar, lighting one myself. He took it, but he did not light it. I saw that his long fingers were unconsciously squeezing it out of all recognisable shape.

'You will pardon the liberty I have taken in obtruding upon your illustrious privacy,' he began; 'but a matter of moment has forced me to dispense with the more honourable formalities. Behold a father plunged in grief for the loss of a beloved son—a son in whom was the light and the wisdom of the world. I know not what has befallen him; but I fear that he is gone, and that my name shall be known no more on earth.'

'Please tell me what has happened.'

'Sorry am I to say that my knowledge is meagre in the extreme. Three days ago he left his home. He has not returned.'

'You have traced him?'

'From house to house, through the city to the North Wall. He was last seen in the vicinity of the Blue Pagoda. For miles the surrounding country has been searched, but without the least success.'

'And you have come to me?'

'To bring the superiority of your honourable brains into action.'

I shrugged my shoulders.

'Name your own reward,' he continued eagerly. 'Though I am a poor man, I would willingly impoverish myself for him who is the flower of his race.'

'You are all alike,' I said. 'You wait until the scent is cold, or the enemy has a long start, and then you come asking me to catch him up. It is impossible. Am I a magician, that I should succeed where other men fail—men who are greater than I?'

'I would have come long since,' he answered frankly; 'but people said, "Who is this foreigner that you should go to him? His vanity is great; it will be greater if he thinks he is indispensable!" So I came not, much to my great sorrow. But all else having failed, I now come to you in my despair, and beg that you will use your illustrious intelligence in my unworthy cause.'

It seemed to me that there was little honour or profit to be got out of this quest; but, taking compassion on the father, I promised to do all that lay within my power, though I warned him of the folly of harbouring any too sanguine expectations. Then, when he was gone, I sat once more, lit a fresh cigar, and began to think. In ten minutes I had decided upon my plan of action. Looking at my watch, I found it was about an hour after midday. Time enough for *tiffin*. After the meal I dressed myself so as to look like a respectable business man, and stole quietly from the house, my objective being the Blue Pagoda. Here Lowan, the son of Tong-Che-Li, was last seen; and from here I intended to

begin my investigations. It was, as I have said, an expedition holding out little prospect of success; but I had promised to go on with it, and I had too much faith in my star to let an unpropitious outlook thwart me.

The Blue Pagoda stood on a slight eminence a little way back from the road, and was approached by a path which led to a considerable village on the other side of the hill. As I entered this path, my eyes fixed on the pagoda, a voice imploring alms fell on my ear. Turning sharply to the right, I saw, seated on the ground by the wayside, one of the most extraordinary figures imaginable. Clothed in rags, and gaunt and dirty, the beggar had doubled himself up in a way that made him seem all arms and legs. He looked up at me with queer, twisted eyes; and then I saw that his face was ghastly with hunger or pain. In one hand he held a crutch, in the other a little tin receptacle for *cash*. Seeing me stand to watch him, he began to whine and supplicate in the most approved fashion, and with the aid of his crutch painfully dragged himself to his feet. If, sitting, he was a pitiable object, standing up he was infinitely worse. His legs seemed to overlap each other in some extraordinary fashion, and had it not been for the support of his crutch they would probably have collapsed altogether.

So this was Meng, the notorious Beggar of the Blue Pagoda. Some said he was rich, though it was difficult to associate riches with such filth and rags; that he was most cruelly afflicted was patent to the least observant. Yet the air was rife with many strange stories of him—stories which did not always redound to his credit. Thus it was said that, while he cringed to the dauntless, he almost demanded alms of the timid, a malicious glance of his twisted eyes being quite enough to extract a small donation. Nervous people, if alone, did their best to elude him in their comings and goings. To pass him without a bribe was an ordeal which few of them had the courage to undergo. Every child who came within reach of his crutch felt the weight of it.

To his earnest solicitations I gave him a few *cash*, and tried my best to enter into a conversation with him; but to all my questions he replied with the one whine, 'Alms, master; alms for the poor cripple.' For a few more *cash* he overwhelmed me with objectionable blessings; but it was not to be blessed by him that I had come. I thought that I could not apply to one more likely to give me the information required. Lowan had last been seen near the Blue Pagoda. The Beggar might remember him, might even recollect if he had been alone or not. It was a very slender chance, but I had learned not to slight the meanest opportunity. Yet when I looked at him I paused as if by intuition; looking close, I found him less satisfactory. Truly his eyes were hideous in their deformity, but I was not sure that I had not seen people twist their eyes in a somewhat

similar manner. Moreover, twisted as they were, it was absolutely impossible for him to see. Yet I had never heard that he was blind. So I began to think, and thought bred considerable doubt. It is probable that never before had Meng been subjected to so close a scrutiny.

'You seem in a pitiable condition,' I said. 'How came your honourable eyes to possess such an extraordinary twist?'

'The gods frowned at my birth,' he answered, turning his face up to me.

I did not wonder at nervous people fleeing from him. He was painfully, frightfully hideous.

Then he began once more the old whine, 'Alms, master; alms for the poor cripple.'

'Why don't you say poor blind cripple?'

'Because Heaven has still left me some consolation. I am not blind.'

'But I say you are. I am a doctor, and I say that it is impossible for you to see with your eyes twisted in this fashion. Liar, thief, cheat! You are not blind, you rogue. Look at me;' and I gripped him by the shoulder with a suddenness which completely threw him off his guard. As if to confirm my suspicion, his eyes opened naturally and he glared furiously at me. I flung him aside, forgetting for the moment his crippled state, and he fell with a whining cry like that of a feeble old man. But I was too angry with him to feel any remorse, so I marched off promising him a visit from the law, while he continued feebly to jabber curses.

However, heeding him not, I passed the pagoda and made my way across the hill to the village of which I have already spoken. Here I spent some time in making inquiries; but of Lowan I secured not one scrap of valuable information, though the people had many strange tales to tell of the Beggar with the twisted eyes.

It was almost dark when I set out from the village; and as I approached the pagoda I saw the fluttering figure of Meng-Hi blocking the path before me. Doubting not that I was seen, I felt at once for my revolver. But a few paces farther on I instinctively came to a halt, for I saw that the man's back was to me. In my soft shoes I had approached so noiselessly that he was unaware of my presence. Hesitating not a moment, I crouched in the grass by the wayside, and almost immediately after the Beggar disappeared in the shadow of the pagoda. Wondering what this could mean, I knelt for some little time, a prey to not a few very curious sensations. But presently I perceived the glimmering of a lantern far down the path, which proclaimed the coming of travellers. Immediately I retreated some paces farther back into the grass.

Certainly I did not know what to expect; but kneeling there, waiting for something to happen, had a most singular effect upon my nerves. I gazed at the pagoda towering ghost-like in the gloom, and something of the awe of the place

made itself felt. I did not wonder at the superstitious folk peopling that strange edifice with evil spirits. But presently, where the path widened by the foot of the pagoda, I beheld the lantern come quivering towards me, though it was too dark to see who carried it. Indeed, strain my ears as I would, I caught no patter of feet; but just then a groan, followed by a piercing shriek, came from the region of the pagoda and wailed away in the darkness. It was a ghostly sound—awesome enough to make a strong-nerved person shudder. Therefore its influence upon the superstitious travellers was no cause for surprise. He who bore the lantern dropped it with a terrified shriek and sprang forward; those who accompanied him also screamed with terror; and presently some half-dozen forms flitted by me, rushing as if for dear life. There would be some strange tales told in the village that night, and many men and women would creep tremblingly to bed.

I sat upon the grass and thought; and thought gave birth to some strange sensations. Fancy assumed the cloak of reality, and Meng, the ghost, and the mystery of the pagoda, became living entities. I was now quite willing to believe most of the tales told of the doings of the supernatural inhabitant. Indeed, had I not heard the shriek and the groan with my own ears?—a pair of witnesses in whom I had implicit confidence. It was no sighing of the wind or screaming of a wandering night-bird, but a ghostly shriek, calculated to make the soul jump from a superstitious body. About it being the cry of a disembodied spirit I had some doubt. Then, what was it? One answer only was obvious. It must be the work of the Beggar, Meng. Hiding behind the pagoda, he had played off his practical joke on the ignorant travellers, who, believing that the place was haunted, wanted but little convincing. I could imagine the ugly wretch revelling in the terror he had awakened; for a fellow with a twisted body could hardly escape a twisted soul. And yet the shriek had come from far up the pagoda; of that I had no doubt whatever. Certainly it is extremely difficult to locate sound; but nevertheless it can be located, and I would venture my oath upon the accuracy of my judgment. Then it was equally obvious that if the sound came from high up the pagoda, somebody must be there to produce it. Was it the Beggar, Meng-Hi?

At any rate, the matter was worth investigating, and I accordingly resolved to investigate it. I therefore began a stealthy advance through the grass on my hands and knees, my ears alert for any suspicious sound, my eyes glued to the windows of the pagoda. But I neither saw nor heard anything calculated to throw light upon my doubts, and I reached the base of the edifice without mishap. Fortunately for me the night was dark, so that once I crept into the shadow

of the projecting base of the lower story I was enabled to stand upright. Instinctively I made for the side where I had seen the Beggar disappear; but in the darkness I could scarcely distinguish one stone from another. However, I quietly made the circuit of the structure, blaming myself all the time for not examining it more closely when I had daylight and the opportunity.

When I say that I had completed the circuit, I mean that I was under the impression I had returned to my starting-place, but that was evidently not so; for, still moving forward, and groping with my hands as before, my fingers suddenly encountered the end of a rope. Startled at the sudden impact, I at once let go, at first scarcely realising what it was I had touched. But a moment's reflection reassured me. I put up my hand again; the thing was still there. A rope undoubtedly, which my fingers instantly encircled. Fancy now assumed a more definite shape; and, as I carefully tested the rope, I found that it was strong enough to bear my weight. Again I thought of the Beggar, though it was impossible to connect him with any acrobatic feat. Yet there was evidently somebody in the pagoda, the entrance to which had been attained by means of this rope. But I could not comprehend the utter carelessness of leaving the rope dangling; unless, in the man's anxiety to reach the upper part of the building before the travellers passed, the thing had been forgotten.

For a time I remained undecided what to do. Reason bade me wait and seize the culprit as he came forth; but rashness, a thing I loathe because it masters me so often, advocated no less daring an enterprise than that of mounting by the rope and exploring the pagoda. But this suggestion was coldly received. I was not going to walk into the lion's den when, by waiting, the lion would most probably walk into my trap. Therefore I clutched the rope and waited—and waited.

I don't know how long I stood there straining intently for every sound. Not many minutes, perhaps; but in my impatience it seemed like an eternity. Then a thought assailed me which made me still more impatient. What if the rascal had gone to roost? I must confess this annoyed me consumedly. I might have to watch through the whole night. True, said reason, but you will catch him in the morning. Yes, indeed; but the morning was a long way off. Moreover, he might draw up his rope and decide to take up his quarters in the pagoda for a month. Then I should be perfectly helpless, as the authorities had too much respect for sacred things to admit of a desecration of the edifice. But when I called in reason to my aid I knew that rashness would gain the day. It was but a petty subterfuge of mine, a sort of conscience-easer. Instinctively my hands gripped the rope

tightly, and my feet began to grope along the masonry for a hold.

This first story, which might be called the foundation of the pagoda, was some twelve or fifteen feet high; and by the time I reached the top I felt that I had gone twice that distance. However, I dragged myself on to the platform, and there rested for a moment to regain my breath. Then, following the line of the rope, I found that it was hooked to a broken stanchion which had been one of the supports of the little balcony that had once run round the edifice, dilapidated fragments of which still remained. It required but little skill for a person standing on the ground to fling the hook round the stanchion. After I had fully regained my breath I crawled carefully to the nearest window, and, parting the weeds which flourished on the sill and in the corners, looked in. Nothing but darkness met my eyes, stillness my ears. I waited patiently, scarcely daring to breathe, yet nevertheless cogitating deeply within myself. The fact is, I was in an extremely awkward predicament. The darkness was so intense that I could not see to move, while to strike a light would have rendered me a rather conspicuous mark. Therefore I hung pendulous, as it were, in the grip of hesitancy, my ingenuity entirely at fault. I leant through the window as far as I could, and felt carefully so as not to dislodge any loose stones or plaster. Still, it must be remembered that I was groping blindly, and the result was that two or three pellets went clattering to the bottom; but, as they made only a slight noise, I was in hopes that little attention would be paid to the occurrence. Nevertheless I drew back and listened and waited.

Five, ten minutes I knelt thus, but no sound came to warn me of any watchfulness within. Then, once more, I gradually protruded my head into the aperture, and was about to light a bit of candle which I found in one of my pockets, when suddenly something whizzed past my ear and caught me a fearful blow on the left shoulder. Though for the moment it paralysed that side, I instinctively shot up my right hand, which immediately came in contact with a man's clothes. With a howl, the fellow struck another blow at me; but here at last the darkness stood my friend, and I escaped any grievous injury.

The momentary paralysis passing away, I seized my assailant with both hands, and immediately he flung himself upon me with the fury of a fiend. Of course, not seeing my danger, I could not tell exactly what he aimed for; but presently I felt myself lurch forward, and the next moment he and I went flying down into the inner darkness of the pagoda. Fortunately the fall was broken by something in the form of a roof or awning, which gave way beneath our weight; otherwise there is no knowing what would have happened, for we next struck the bottom with a force which shook the wind out of me, and

necessitated a loosening of our grip. Instinctively we both rolled away from each other.

Still as death I sat, holding my breath, listening intently, a revolver in my hand. But he gave no sound, and I tried to delude myself into the belief that he was knocked senseless; and yet I dared not put that belief to the test by lighting a match, for fear that he might shoot me, or spring upon me with his knife before I could defend myself. So for some minutes I sat quite still, until the darkness and the strain became intolerable; and during the whole of that time my mysterious assailant gave no sign of life. A dozen times I was tempted to strike a light; but some instinct which would not be gainsaid forbade the dangerous experiment. Still, I could no longer endure the terrible strain; so, as noiselessly as possible, I rose to my feet and carefully began to feel my way about, and the first thing my hand touched was a *human face*. I drew back with a shudder, while the owner of the face uttered a gasping shriek, which sounded singularly awesome in the uncanny darkness. After that we seemed instinctively to give each other more breathing space. Occasionally I heard him moving in the darkness; but for many minutes at a time no sound broke the awful stillness. I, backing a little, had come in contact with the wall, and there I meant to stay. It might be a long vigil, but daylight would come. With its first ray we should see who was to be master.

It now struck me as somewhat curious that he, who must have known so well every inch of the ground, had made no effort to escape in the darkness; and, the more I thought of this, the more valuable I believed my present position to be. Moreover, what meant the noise he was making over yonder if not to attract me thither? I believed, and not without reason, that I guarded the exit, and I pressed my back still more firmly against the wall, and vainly sought to penetrate the awful gloom. It may be difficult to convey the horror of such a situation; it certainly was one I have no wish a second time to experience. Indeed, it gradually grew so unbearable that I knew that it was exhausting my patience; and, had he not fortunately forestalled me in a forward movement, I might have been led to perpetrate some act of indiscretion.

I had remained so abnormally quiet, so immovable, that he could no longer endure the intolerable uncertainty. The warnings of his whereabouts had proved ineffective. I believed I guarded the exit, and no temptation would remove me from my post. But he, finding that the strain was no longer to be borne, and no doubt hoping that I had moved, began to creep forward, and I felt his outstretched fingers suddenly encircle my neck. It was a fearful shock; but, realising that the time had come, I instantly gripped him with my left hand, and with the other hurriedly raised the revolver. But before I

could fire, he, aiming at my head no doubt, hit me across the knuckles with a blunt instrument of some description, knocking the weapon from my hand. As it fell to the ground it exploded.

And now began a fierce struggle between me and my unknown assailant, he trying his hardest to choke me, I striving to return the compliment. He kicked, bit, scratched, fumed; he was like a hell-cat, a fiend let loose from the bottomless pit. A dozen times I thought I had him at my mercy, and as often he escaped me. I tried to throw him, but he was like a cat on his legs. His fury and his strength were equally remarkable, his attack being of the most venomous and savage nature. But at last I got a grip on him; and, forcing him back against the wall, I pressed my knee into his stomach, and presently he hung limp in my hands. I touched his head. It fell without resistance from side to side. The man was either dead or unconscious. Of that there could no longer be the slightest doubt.

Carefully laying him on the floor, and kneeling upon him for fear that he was shamming, I lit a match and held it low down, and I was not a little astonished to see the face of the Beggar, Meng; for, though I had believed him to be the culprit, his agility in the fight was not such as one would associate with a cripple. Indeed, the deformity of Mr Meng was but a clever assumption.

Well, I lit my candle and secured him, and I found that I was right in my conjecture respecting

the exit. Above me dangled a rope, by the aid of which Meng drew himself up and let himself down into the well of the pagoda, which he had transformed into a living apartment. It was the roof of this dwelling which had broken our fall.

Having no wish to spend the remainder of the night in such company, I once more examined my victim; and, finding that his breath came regularly, and that he was securely bound, I felt no scruple in leaving him. With the aid of the rope I easily swung myself up out of the dismal hole, and glad was I once more to feel the fresh air play about my heated face.

Little remains to be told. I hastened to the city, through the gates of which I had permission to pass at any hour; and, returning with my assistants, we soon had Mr Meng-Hi hoisted out of his retreat. An investigation of the pagoda resulted in our discovering, among many other things, the personal effects of the missing Lowan. Meng-Hi had murdered him, and his body, with the bodies of several others, was buried in the pagoda.

Not long after this the old edifice was struck by lightning and partly demolished, an incident which proved beyond doubt the anger Heaven entertained towards the accursed place. The authorities consequently had it razed to the ground. But the old people still pass the spot with a shudder, though the earth is no longer encumbered with the Beggar of the Blue Pagoda.

PICTORIAL POST-CARDS.

By NORMAN ALLISTON.



WHEN, some years ago, an astute photographer in Passau, Germany, chemically sensitised an ordinary postal card, and subsequently printed a view of his native town upon it, he little thought that he had thereby given birth to a craze absolutely unparalleled in the history of souvenir cards. The extraordinarily rapid development and wide diffusion of the craze is generally little known or imperfectly realised in this country. A few figures, gleaned from the report of the British Consul at Frankfort, should convince the sceptical that the pictorial post-card, having outlived the faddy stage and become a separate and distinct art, must be taken seriously.

A trade-paper estimates the number of workmen who find employment solely by the manufacture of illustrated post-cards at twelve thousand. It has been stated that at present about one hundred new post-cards are published daily in Germany. Calculating on the average of one thousand copies per design—a low estimate according to experts—this gives a daily total of one

hundred thousand cards, or six hundred thousand per week, which equals a yearly issue of over thirty million. As the German postal authorities report an increase of twelve million on the number of postal cards despatched yearly as compared with the number posted before the growth of the craze, it follows that Germany must export a large number of the same. This is indeed the case, for Germany exports more than half of the total number of cards that she makes, the principal recipients being South America, Australia, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, and Sweden.

We would remind those who may fancy that the above estimate of an average issue of one thousand copies per design appears an excessive one, that during a single season one hundred and forty-eight thousand postal cards of the national Niederwald Monument of Germania were sent through the post. This beautifully situated memorial, erected to commemorate the success of the Fatherland in the Franco-German war, is annually visited by a large number of patriots and foreign tourists, which fact no doubt accounts for the extraordinary figures above. This, of

course, also applies to the Kyfhauser Monument, for which exactly the same numbers are given. The old tower of the castle at Heidelberg figured on no less than thirty-six thousand cards in one season. Again, more than one million illustrated pasteboards were despatched from an industrial exhibition which has lately concluded at Berlin; while at the Horticultural Exhibition at Hamburg the number mailed is officially given as five hundred and seventy-two thousand.

From the above it may be seen how acute Germany's cartomania is. If further proof were needed, one has only to peruse the numerous cartophilic press. There exist no fewer than forty to fifty journals entirely devoted to cartography in this sense.* About one-half of these are published in Germany; while Austria, Italy, Hungary, France, Belgium, and Switzerland each possess one or several journals—mostly monthly ones. A large percentage of these are the official organs of souvenir post-card clubs; others are designed to cater for the unattached collector.

These few statistics should at least compel respect for the insidious souvenir post-card, which threatens to become a dangerous rival to the postage-stamp, so far as collecting is concerned. Indeed, it is almost bound to become more widely popular. It is complete in itself: on one card you have the foreign stamp and postmark, the greeting or notice of safe arrival of your friend, and, lastly, the presentment of his present surroundings—a picture of some far-off land, a lasting and pleasant souvenir. Thus the illustrated post-card admirably fulfils its mission in a handy form, conveying more than the verbose four-page letter in a fraction of its space. Add to this the fact that neat post-card albums are obtainable at very moderate prices, and it will be acknowledged that post-card collecting is at once an amusing and convenient hobby.

Some of the albums hold two, others four, cards on a page; but the method of inserting the post-card is common to all, the card being slipped under small slits in the paper in such a manner that it is held by the tips of its four corners, thus obviating the necessity of using adhesives. In this connection an example of our English conservatism and insularity may be noted—namely, that, among all the European countries, our post-cards alone differ in size and shape from those which are almost universally adopted. It follows that English souvenir cards are looked upon with disfavour among foreign collectors, because they do not fit into albums that hold post-cards of the more general size.

Concerning the illustrated cards themselves, it is most difficult to give any idea of the extreme

* The little barbarisms, 'cartomania,' 'cartophilic,' 'cartography,' are hardly distinctive enough; but they have been used for the sake of brevity. 'Cartography' till of late meant only the much more important 'science' of map-making.

diversity of their style; but they may perhaps be divided into two classes—namely, photographic reproductions and others. At first the post-cards reproducing photographic views exhibited very crude workmanship, similar to the penny view-books sold in the London streets. A very different order of things now prevails, and the general excellence of the make-up of souvenir cards having been considerably perfected, several German firms are able to place upon the market, at the old prices, photographic post-cards which for finish and clearness of detail surpass the illustrations of our best monthly magazines. The same may be said of the lithographed reproductions of water-colour drawings, some of which are by noted artists. Topical post-cards are in great request—such, for instance, as the 'Dreyfus Affair' card, with a photo of the disgraced soldier sandwiched between Zola and Picquart; or the 'Peace Conference' card, with photos of half-a-dozen of the principal delegates. So-called 'art' post-cards are enjoying a fashionable vogue at present; abstract subjects are usually fantastically handled in line or monochrome by clever artists, and some of the designs may lay claim to lasting value. In others of these 'art' post-cards the artist's daring exceeds his discretion, sometimes as regards the subject dealt with, at other times in the inartistic execution, in which latter case the result is often a flaming, meretricious miniature poster, depicting vermilion cows against a background of purple trees, or the like.

In this, as in other industries, novelties will always command a ready sale, and are consequently brought out in large numbers. Among the minor novelties may be counted the partially transparent picture post-cards; these, when held up to the light, reveal some unexpected distortion of the real picture, as in some Christmas cards.

A post-card, measuring twelve inches by ten with a panoramic view of the town from which it is to be sent is certainly something new. This Brobdingnagian post-card, which could easily be cut up into half-a-dozen English court-shape post-cards, is of course far above the size allowed by the post-office regulations, and is therefore mailed as *Drucksache*, or printed matter.

A fragile and costly novelty to send through the post is a thin strip of wood (!) of regulation post-card size, with some sylvan scene hand-painted in oils on the back.

The secret-code card is a very ingenious conception; it consists of a numbered card perforated at regular intervals. This is placed over an ordinary post-card, and the blank spaces written in; the code-card must now be turned, leaving other spaces to be filled in. A post-card written in this manner will be practically indecipherable except to the recipient, who has beforehand been supplied with the corresponding key-card.

Some pictorial post-cards have their views in relief, yet leaving the side reserved for the address

perfectly flat. Others have facings of silk—that is to say, views woven in silk; these clever works of art emanate from Crefeld, the home and centre of the German silk-weaving manufactories, and are comparatively cheap.

The very latest, and a very interesting novelty, are the metachrome cards. The pictures, coloured or otherwise printed, are coated with a thin layer of white oil paint, making the view underneath look misty, but at the same time rendering it possible to use the whole surface for writing. On receiving the card thus written on, the message should be duly noted, and the post-card laid in water; in a moment—hey, presto!—the writing and mist have entirely disappeared, leaving a charming view, or what not, ready for insertion in the album.

As in stamp collecting, certain post-cards possess greater value for the collector than others. The more remote the locality from which the illustrated card is mailed the rarer it becomes. Of course, money will bring together a fine collection, for by means of existing post-card societies it is possible to have rare post-cards mailed to any address from all sorts of out-of-the-way places, in return for so much money. These societies have correspondents practically all over the world, and have a fixed scale of charges. They advertise cards in series, and agree to post, for instance, an American series (say five cards from five important cities in the United States) to your address within a certain time for the sum of two shillings. A series depicting the royal residences at London, Berlin, Paris, Moscow, and Constantinople costs the same amount, each one being posted from its respective capital. In this manner a large and varied collection of souvenir post-cards might be formed, but many prefer to keep such only as have been forwarded to them by friends.

Private post-card agents also undertake to keep the moneyed collector well supplied by making special journeys to a neighbouring country, where they agree to mail to subscribers a pictorial card from every town of importance they visit.

Reverting for a moment to rare post-cards, news is just to hand of a set of illustrated cards that has gone up a hundred per cent. in value under peculiar circumstances. These particular cards contained a copy of a photograph taken in Posen; and, Posen being a fortified town of the first rank, the authorities objected to a certain strategic secret being given to the world on the back of an illustrated post-card. Thirty-two stationers and retail merchants were therefore summoned for selling such wares, were fined, and ordered to deliver up their stock of this particular set of cards and the blocks from which they were printed. Some one or two hundred copies of the condemned print are nevertheless reported to be in circulation.

At the time of writing, two important illustrated post-card exhibitions are being held: the

one at Ostend (this is the first that has ever been held in Belgium), the other at Berlin. Some twenty to thirty thousand specimens of the new industry are on view at the German capital. Visitors to Paris next year will also have an opportunity of marking the progress made in France in the publishing of embellished post-cards, as there will be a national exhibition at Versailles. It is a sign of the times that a cartophilic congress has lately been held at Prague.

How, then, is this post-card industry progressing in our own country? Very indifferently, it must be admitted. There are several reasons to account for this state of affairs, the chief among which is no doubt the innate conservatism of our merchants and manufacturers. English illustrated post-cards compare very favourably with those of foreign make as regards the price; but as regards artistic effect, fine finish, and general excellence of get up, our cards are absolutely 'not in it,' as the schoolboy would say. 'No,' say the English postal authorities; 'we have got a certain shape for post-cards, and we're not going to alter that for anybody.' 'No,' likewise says the English printer; 'we use a certain process which gives a wood-block, smudgy appearance to photogravures, and we're not going to alter that for anybody, either. None of your new-fangled, made-in-Germany notions here. I print the card as I want to; you can take it or leave it, as you like!' Result: the public leaves it. The inadaptability of the home merchant to new conditions is apparent in his mode of selling the finished cards. Generally speaking, you cannot get a card singly; they are all put up in packets. This is obviously bad policy, for who wants to send off a dozen post-cards to herald a few hours' stay in a strange town? A welcome exception to this absurd custom are the penny-in-the-slot illustrated post-card machines to be seen at some of the more important railway termini. The only thing that prevents these from becoming more widely patronised is the fact that the cards which they supply are not sufficiently attractive.

Our fine art publishers would seem to be quite blind to the possibilities of the pictorial post-card, and are seemingly ignorant of the commercial profit to be reaped from the speedy sale of novel and original art productions. Illustrated Christmas cards are no longer fashionable; birthday cards and valentines are things of the past. Now, if ever, then, is surely the time for novel pictorial post-cards to be placed on the market, the time to commission original designs by capable British artists, to expend sufficient care over their printing and finish, and, finally, to widely distribute them. This latter essential—the distribution—is very badly managed in England; stationers seem to be the only retail tradesmen who sell cards. In Germany they can be obtained at every café, restaurant, or hotel; tobacconists, barbers, toy-vendors, and, naturally, book-shops and stationers retail them; hawkers sell them in the

street, at the railway stations, on steamboats and trains, anywhere and everywhere. While not advocating quite such an ubiquitous distribution as obtains in Germany and other parts of the Continent (where, it must be remembered, they are passing through the crisis of cartomania), we think that it should be possible to obtain single illustrated cards at tobacconists, at railway newspaper stalls, and at hotels.

The illustrated post-card is bound to become immensely popular in England, if only our apathetic designers, printers, and retail shopkeepers awake to the fact that profits will follow adequate commercial exploitation.

Pictorial post-card collecting forms an interesting and fascinating hobby, and the filled album will make an agreeable diversion, at once artistic, reminiscent, and instructive. It is perhaps not generally known that Her Majesty the Queen has taken great interest in the development of the picture post-card, and has requested a royal relative to form a collection on her behalf. This should give considerable stimulus to the awakening interest felt in England in the illustrated post-card, and bring the boom within measurable distance. Let us hope that the latter will produce many miniature artistic masterpieces, and not merely result in an unintelligent, evanescent craze.

IRISH INDUSTRIES.

THE MARBLES OF IRELAND.

By MARY GORGES.



ONE of the many difficulties with which Irish industries have had to contend has been the want of interest shown by the Irish themselves during past years, when the tide of fashion was adverse to Ireland and her products; when in fact, if not in word, the feeling existed—among a certain section at least—that no good thing could come out of the country. In *The Absentee* Miss Edgeworth has faithfully depicted this, in the character of Lady Clonbrony, with her affectation of what she supposes to be the true English accent, her 'ree'lly' and 'cawnt,' her horror of being supposed to be Irish. It would be interesting to trace the causes which produced an idea so prevalent; but here I only mention it as a powerful factor in the failure of former attempts to turn the natural advantages of the country to account. The reaction has come; strangers are recognising the resources which Ireland possesses, and are directing the world's attention to them; and therefore some which have never quite died out are receiving a fresh impetus, while others yet in their infancy begin to look forward to a great future.

The Irish marbles and granites are instances in point. It is strange how little is generally known about an Irish industry which cannot be regarded as new—the quarrying and manufacture of marble. Many hundred years ago, as remarked recently, 'the ecclesiastical architecture of Ireland bore splendid testimony to the skill of native workmen in forming beautiful designs from the various marbles found in the country.'

The marbles of Kilkenny are the first mentioned in ancient records. Mr G. H. Kinahan, late of the Geological Survey, writes: 'The black marbles of Kilkenny are historic. Although we have in very ancient structures—such as

those of Askeaton, County Limerick, and Clonmacnoise, King's County, samples of very ancient marble, yet the first written record of Irish marble seems to be that of Gerrard Boate, written in 1652, in which he mentions: "Beside the freestone which is in every part of the land, there is marble found in many places, but more about Kilkenny, where not only many houses are built of the same, but whole streets are paved with it. . . . This marble, while it is rude as it cometh out of the ground, looketh grayish, but being polished it getteth a fine brownish colour, drawing somewhat towards the black."'

The marble-works at Kilkenny were the first direct endeavour to utilise this product of the soil in modern times. They were founded in 1730, or perhaps a little earlier, by Mr William Colles, the son of a physician and surgeon who settled in Kilkenny in the latter end of the seventeenth century. The business has remained ever since in his family—that is, for five generations. William Colles is remarkable for having been the first person, in modern times at least, who applied power to the manufacture of marble, the various processes before his time having all been performed by hand. The following is an extract taken from an account of him and his mill in Tighe's *Survey of the County Kilkenny*, published in 1802:

'The mill is admirable for the simplicity of its structure and for the power it exerts. A wheel gives motion by a crank at one end of its axis to a frame containing twelve saws, which do the work of about twenty men. By a crank at the other end it moves a frame of five polishers; at this end Mr Colles has lately fitted a frame beneath the polishers with eight saws. The mill may fairly be said to do the duty of forty-two men daily. Water is never wanting; and from the goodness of its structure it is

scarce ever stopped on account of repairs. . . . The machinery of the mill was the invention of Alderman Colles, grandfather of the present proprietor. He was, to use the words of an ingenious communication, a man of great mechanical abilities, and abounding in a variety of those eccentric schemes which mark original genius; one of which was an attempt to make dogs weave linen by turning wheels; another, the supplying the Corporation of Dublin with bored marble tubes as pipes for distributing water through the city, was defeated only by a combination of pump-borers and other mechanics, who rose in a mob and destroyed them on their arrival. While he amused the populace by various devices, such as that of a musical instrument which played by itself and floated on the stream of the river, and many others, he applied himself to the construction of machinery for different purposes, and invented a water-mill and an engine for dressing flax, simple and efficacious. He applied his marble to the construction of a vast variety of articles.'

In a *Tour in Ireland*, published in London in 1748, by Two Englishmen, it is said: 'Near the mill are apartments called warehouses, where you may see such a diversity of chimney-pieces, cisterns, buffets, vases, punch-bowls, frames for looking-glasses and pictures, &c., that they would employ the eye the longest day, and yet find something to admire. The marble is full as durable and bears as high a polish as any brought from Italy. I am informed that this ingenious gentleman sends yearly several shiploads to England, which gives me a particular satisfaction, that they may find a native of Ireland has outdone all they have hitherto seen.'

The marble referred to here is the black fossil marble of Kilkenny; but there are many others, beautiful specimens of some of which lie before me.

The Kilkenny marble-mills are situated on the banks of the beautiful river Nore, and are about two miles south of the town of Kilkenny. The machinery is driven by five large water-mills, and every stage of the process may here be seen, from the hewing and raising the marble blocks at the quarries to the cutting, sawing, chiselling, moulding, turning, rubbing, gritting, and polishing.

The Kilkenny black marble is of two kinds: one a jet black, of shining depth, which recalls the derivation of marble from the Greek *mar-mairein*—to shine or glitter; the other is richly marked with fossil formations. Kilkenny also produces marble of dark steel-gray, flecked with a lighter shade, and each of these blends beautifully with the green marble from Connemara, and the red, pink, and dove-coloured from County Cork. Two of these marbles bear the poetic names of 'Gray Sunset' and 'Pink Sunset,' the light-gray ground of the first being shaded

with pink, through which run veins of deeper colour; while the other has a redder tinge and darker veinings—just such difference as is between the sunsets of early spring, with their pink flush and delicate tintings, and the vivid reds and stormy grays of a later season. Two extremely handsome red marbles are called respectively 'Acres' and 'Victoria' or 'Cork Red'—it seems to have both names—in order to distinguish them, as they come from the same district, and resemble each other, though the 'Victoria Red' is darker, being, indeed, of rich claret or maroon colour. This comes from Little Island in Queenstown Harbour, and other parts of County Cork. The limestone of these quarries is, moreover, very valuable, for it bears the brunt of centuries of wear, and still retains its colouring, which is beautiful, taking the most delicate traceries, and under skilful hands a high polish, showing fossil formations. The Cathedral of St Finn Barre, Cork, is of this material, and the pillars in the nave are of the 'Cork Red' marble, as are the pillars of the large Catholic church at Queenstown. The Cathedral is a magnificent building, standing on the site of the ancient monastery of St Finn Barre, first Bishop of Cork.

It was Mr Martin of Ballinahinch—the famous Dick Martin, who owned nearly all the countryside between Galway and Clifden, whose avenue was forty miles long, and whose exertions caused the passing of the 'Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' in days when the subject was scarce thought of—he it was who first polished the green marble of Lissoughter, Connemara. A mantelpiece of this marble which was presented by him to George IV. is now in the Carlton Club, London. An American company is working the quarry at Lissoughter now, and sending large-blocks to America; while the quarry belonging to the Irish Marble Company is at Streamstown, near Clifden.

About thirty years ago the town of Galway was the seat of fairly prosperous marble-works; and as tourists were then beginning to find their way to beautiful Connemara, some trade was done in ornaments which they could carry away as souvenirs of the country, such as brooches in designs of shamrock clusters, or harps, crosses, links, pendants, and charms of various kinds—all pretty and effective, and showing wonderfully in small compass the many tints of the green, from aquamarine to deep myrtle, sometimes in veins sharply contrasting with the colour of the ground, sometimes in delicate shadings, like those produced by the effect of light on green waves. So it came to pass that Connemara marble was a little better known to the outside world than were others; indeed, by many it was thought the only Irish marble of any consideration, and quite unique in colour. But green marbles are found in Italy and other countries, though, as a rule, their colour is darker than that of the Irish green. In a

highly-polished specimen from the Kilkenny marble-mills this is moss-green, the vivid green of moss that grows in the shade, at once soft and bright, and thrown out by a gray-blue ground, seen between the green which, as it were, clusters over it. Contrasting it with a duller, more opaque specimen of the same, coming from another source, I can understand how wonderful must be the process of polishing in the Kilkenny marble-mills of which I have heard. The Galway works failed, and lay idle until about fourteen years ago, when a Galway resident, Mr J. Miller, determined to try if the trade could not be revived. He reopened the works, and with no small success began to draw marble from the quarries of Connemara, and turn it to various uses. He also worked the black marble quarry, about three miles from the town of Galway, the product of which is highly esteemed. At his works are some very beautiful mantelpieces of this black marble, with artistic insets of Galway granite, executed most effectively by Galway men, who are found admirable subjects for training to this craft.

To properly appreciate the Galway green marble it should be seen in pillars, slabs, staircases, the architraves to doors, and dados, in all of which it is now employed, as well as in the mantelpieces, which from the first have been prized. It forms a beautiful contrast to the red and other Irish marbles, as was strikingly shown lately in a pulpit executed by Messrs Sharpe & Emery, of Dublin, the gift of an Irish gentleman to a newly-erected church in Jerusalem, the sides of which are panels of these various marbles. So the Isle of Saints sends forth of her treasures to the Mother of Christendom!

Messrs P. J. Neill & Co., Dublin, showed me several designs of Celtic crosses and ornaments, for which the firm was awarded the gold medal at Chicago. One in particular, an adaptation of the Royal Cross of Cong, in which Sicilian marble was used with Victoria red and Connemara green, promised a beautiful effect when finished. Messrs Neill & Co. do a large business in ecclesiastical work, and speak hopefully of the prospects of our Irish marble industry, as they find that the home product gives as much satisfaction as the imported article, and the demand for it has greatly increased within recent years. This is pleasant to hear from the senior establishment of sculptors in Dublin, and the more satisfactory, because, as a rule, only very beautiful materials are used in church work, and the test by comparison is therefore great.

There is a movement on foot with the purpose of arranging for an exhibit of Irish marbles at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition. Even if this led to no appreciable extension of trade abroad, in view of the cost of freightage, the heavy import duties charged, and the fact that marbles are plentiful in most foreign countries, yet indirectly this exhibit would probably be of great advantage by spreading the knowledge of our

Irish marbles among those who, as Lady Cadogan recently pointed out, scarcely know of their existence; but principally by calling attention to them on the part of the Irish themselves, who are often too ready to conclude that what comes from a distance must necessarily be superior to that which can be got at home. Yet the foreign marbles, equally with our own, do not bear long exposure to weather without losing their lustre, and both are therefore better fitted for internal than for external decorations, and inferior in this respect to our native granite, which is rapidly growing in importance.

For the reasons already given, there is little trade with the continent of Europe, but the Irish Marble Company do a very fair business with the United States in marble and monumental work, the latter in unpolished gray marble, which is of a uniform pleasing shade and very durable, bearing well the severe test of American winters, to which white marble soon succumbs. The trade with the United States might be much larger but for the very high duties which are levied there on imported marbles, both in a rough and polished state. On polished marble the duty is fifty per cent. *ad valorem*.

A monument of Kilkenny stone in memory of the late Cyrus W. Field, projector of the Atlantic telegraph, has recently been worked at the Kilkenny marble-mills, and sent to the United States for erection there. It consists of a massive double headstone and moulded base, the headstone sloped on top and moulded on edges, with carved palm-branches crossing each other, and surmounted by a Latin cross, all in high relief on the front, with the inscription in raised polished letters underneath.

The Irish Marble Company have also supplied the slab from their quarries at Kilkenny for a very interesting memorial tombstone erected in Peterborough Cathedral to Queen Catharine of Aragon, the cost having been defrayed by the 'Catharines' of England, Scotland, Ireland, and America; Mrs Clayton, the wife of Canon Clayton, being one of the originators of the movement. It is a beautiful specimen of Irish gray fossil marble, and consists of a solid slab weighing nearly a ton. The face is highly polished. In the centre is the true coat-of-arms of Catharine of Aragon, containing representations of castles, lions, and eagles, and rich ornamental lines delicately carved. The only other enrichment is an incised wheel-cross surmounted by fleurs-de-lis. The lettering forms the border between incised lines, the groundwork being 'sparrow-pecked.' The work has been carried out from the design of Mr Pearson, R.A., the Cathedral architect.

H.R.H. the Duchess of York, while in Ireland during the spring of 1899, paid a visit to the ancient cathedral of St Canice, Kilkenny, and on seeing the new marble pavement in the chancel, which consists exclusively of choice Irish marbles

from the quarries of the Irish Marble Company, Kilkenny, she made the remark that it was certainly the most beautiful pavement she had ever seen—a remark, need it be said, eagerly listened to and remembered.

The Irish marble industry has been able to hold its ground through all its difficulties, and what is really wanted to enable it to do much more is a very simple matter—namely, that persons

of wealth and position who contemplate or have entered on building operations should require their architects to specify native coloured marbles (both British and Irish) instead of the foreign varieties which architects are so fond of. This suggestion, if adopted, will do more to help our native marbles than anything else; and it is to be hoped that some influential person may soon set the good example.

SOME STAGE CONTRETEMPS.



NE of those unrehearsed incidents which call for extra smartness on the part of the performer if he wishes to avoid appearing ridiculous occurred at a performance of *The Shop Girl* during October 1895.

The French Count, at a sally of wit from Appleby anent his feet, retorts sarcastically, 'I reserve my foot for you, sare,' at the same time raising it as if in the act of kicking. On this occasion his boot unfortunately flew off into the wings, displaying a large hole in his sock. The ready-witted comedian who played the part was, however, equal to the occasion. 'Farewell, sare!' he exclaimed tragically, limping round the stage. 'Farewell! We shall meet again! I go—to mend my socks!' The house literally roared with laughter.

Miss Sarah Thorne tells a good story of how, when she was playing in *The Colleen Bawn* at a provincial theatre, the gun loaded with powder to shoot Danny Mann was missing from the wing just before it was required, and could not be found. At the last moment one of the actors, eating from a paper bag, emptied out the biscuits, inflated the bag, and bursting it with a sudden blow, Danny rolled over into the water, killed by the report of a paper bag as effectually as he would have been by a real gun.

Miss Marie Wainwright narrates an absurd instance that nearly threw her off her balance during a first night: 'Perhaps you remember that as Dame Hannah, in *Ruddigore*, I had to go on with a small dagger, with which to threaten the wicked Baronet's wife. When my turn came round the dagger was nowhere to be found. Nothing would induce me to go on without my property, and although Mr Barrington implored me to appear without it, I was resolute. There was a terrible stage wait, and at last Mr Barrington grew desperate, and forcing something into my hand, absolutely pushed me on to the stage. And what do you think it was? A large gas key. I continued to conceal the absurd makeshift from the audience; but when I had to hand my supposed dagger to Mr Grossmith, he most unkindly gave me away. 'How can I kill myself with this thing?' he said, holding up the gas key in its

entirety, which produced a perfect howl of laughter, and for some minutes we were unable to continue.'

One of those extraordinary lapses of memory which sometimes affects actors once occurred to Mrs Patrick Campbell when acting at the St James's Theatre. 'My most painful experience since being on the stage,' says that lady, 'occurred one evening when, two minutes after my entrance in the first act of *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, an absolute blank of memory came over me. I had played Mrs Tanqueray more than a hundred times; but every word had left me for the moment, and I had to read the part from the prompt book; yet I heard from friends and professionals in front that I never played better.'

When Charles Kean was playing 'Richard III.,' his fearful grimaces in character paralysed all the other actors with fright, much to his amusement. On one occasion a new man had to take the part of the sentinel who awoke Richard. When asked 'Who is there?' he had to say, 'Tis I, my lord; the village cock hath twice proclaimed the hour of morn.' But as Kean was making such fearful grimaces and scowling at him, the poor fellow lost his head, and could only stammer, 'Tis I, my lord; 'tis I, my lord; the—village cock! 'Tis I, my lord; the—village cock!' By this time there was a decided titter all over the theatre, and Kean then said, 'Then why the mischief don't you crow?' which, needless to say, brought down the house.

Jefferson while playing 'Rip Van Winkle' went to the theatre one evening tired out after a long day's fishing. When the curtain rose on the third act it disclosed the white-haired Rip still deep in his twenty years' nap. Five, ten, twenty minutes passed, and he did not wake. The fact was that all the time he was really sleeping. Finally, the patience of the gods became exhausted, and one called out, 'Is there going to be nineteen years more of this snooze business?' At this point Jefferson began to snore, which, decided the prompter, who, opening a small trap, began to prod him from below. The much-travelled comedian began to fumble in his pocket for an imaginary railway-ticket, and muttered, 'Going right through, collector,' which transfixed the audience with amazement. An instant later Jefferson sat up, with a loud shriek, evidently in

agony. The exasperated prompter had 'jabbed' him with a pin.

The audience is sometimes responsible for interruptions which give performers an opportunity of displaying their ready wit. Barry Sullivan, the Irish tragedian, was playing in *Richard III.* some years ago at Shrewsbury. When the actor came to the lines, 'A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!' some one in the pit called out, 'Wouldn't a donkey suit you, Mr Sullivan?' 'Yes,' responded the tragedian, turning quickly on the interrupter; 'please come round to the stage door.'

Many years back, when Toole was playing at the Hull theatre, a man in the stage-box suddenly inquired if he might ask him a question. Toole seemed surprised, and answered, 'After the play.' But the man persisted, whereat the audience roared, 'Turn him out.' Toole calmed them, saying, 'We are Englishmen; let every man have his say;' adding to the man, 'Go on, sir.' 'I want,' said he, 'to ask your advice. Having a little more money than I knew what to do with'—here Toole pricked up his ears—'I invested it with the Khedive of Egypt, and now I can't get my interest. What would you do?' 'I think,' said the actor, 'I should *sue his canal.*' There was never a laugh. A London audience would have fully appreciated such a sally; but it fell quite flat on the ears of the north-country folk, who went home growling in a mystified way that Mr Toole had been fooling them somehow.

Signor Foli some years since took part in a concert at St Helens, where he sang 'The Raft.' He had just finished the first verse when an infant in arms made the hall resound with its cries. Foli commenced the second verse, the first line of which runs, 'Hark! what sound is that which greets the mother's ear?' He could get no farther than the end of the line by reason of a fit of uncontrollable laughter. The audience at first failed to see the cause of his mirth, but presently it dawned upon them, and they all laughed heartily with him. He left the stage, but soon returned smiling, and rendered in his inimitable style, 'Out on the Deep.'

This calls to mind an absurd blunder related in Tom Moore's *Diary* concerning John Kemble. He was performing one of his favourite parts at some country theatre, and was interrupted from time to time by the squalling of a child in the gallery, until at length, angered by this rival performance, Kemble walked with solemn steps to the front of the stage, and exclaimed in his most tragic tones, 'Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play is stopped the child cannot possibly go on!'

It was not often that Charles Mathews was nonplussed; but one night at the Olympic a swell in a front stall got up in the middle of one of the scenes to put on his coat for the purpose of leaving; whereupon Charles, with a cool manner

which in any one else would have been impertinent, said, 'You had better wait a little, sir; there's more to come.' 'That's just the reason I am going,' said the swell; and Charles said afterwards that he had never felt so sat upon in his life.

Like all else, this subject has its tragic side. Once at the Surrey Theatre the harlequin slipped as he leaped through a clock-face, and his leg stuck in the scene. Harry Payne, who was playing clown, thinking to cover a bad retreat with a laugh, took hold of the leg, and shaking it violently, roared out, 'Oh, there's a clumsy man!' The harlequin was pulled through, and the scene proceeded; but as he did not put in an appearance again, Harry asked the prompter what was the matter. 'Poor fellow! he has broken his leg,' was the reply. It was the leg that Harry Payne had shaken. When he heard what he had done it was too much for his big, tender heart, and he fainted dead away.

THE MORN'S MEANING.

HERE in the height I sit awhile;
Down in the vale the river leaps and sings,
And all ephemeral exultant things
Sun themselves in God's smile.

My heart, attuned and answering,
Feels the grave passion of an autumn day
Beat, like the music of a pulse at play,
In blade and leaf and wing.

My spirit mystically hears
The intense, innumerable, murmurous sound,
The audible silence of Earth's endless round
That comes not in the ears;

And the strong sense of life divine
Diffused through golden Nature's happy mood
Makes a communion of the solitude,
And all the world a shrine.

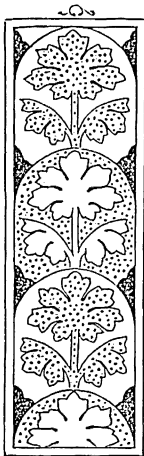
It is a chapter hard to con.
Sages are fain to read it, seers have sought
To scan its page, and all has come to nought:
And the great scene goes on.

For who his daring skill would prove
On such a theme, must spare both lore and wit,
Leave the blind sophist to his chains, and sit
In the sweet school of Love.

There I—born blind—have sat, and see;
And solve the enigma well, and understand
This thing, that in the touch of one small hand
Lies all the world for me.

And I, Love's scholar, reading true,
This bright morn's lesson do declare, and say
To you, my dear, my loved one, far away,
That I, you love, love you.

T. H. PASSMORE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF LOOKING AT THINGS.



STAY-AT-HOME people in England are rather apt to get into the way of looking at things from one particular standpoint; and it is only when we go abroad that we find others—and especially those of a different religion to ourselves—who may be most excellent characters and good citizens in every way, taking exactly the opposite view to ourselves. For instance, it is considered a laudable ambition with us for a father to wish that his son should rise in the world and reach a higher social position. But a good Hindu, owing to the caste system, never dreams of making his son in any way different from himself; and if a groom or a farrier, for instance, had twenty sons, they would all be brought up to the father's trade. In the same way, they never dispute the superiority of a man of a higher caste than themselves; and, conversely, a high-caste man never considers it necessary to disguise his contempt for a man of a lower caste.

I remember that once when I was having my lesson in Hindustani from my high-caste *munshi*, whom I employed on first arriving in India, he dilated with great bitterness on the arrogance of Europeans. Presently, wishing to give some orders to my low-caste sweeper about my dogs, I asked the *munshi* to interpret for me, and, among other things, to hand the sweeper two rupees, and to give my directions as to certain purchases. Instead of placing the money in the man's hand, the *munshi* threw it on the ground, and the sweeper quite contentedly gathered up the coins, saluted respectfully, and withdrew. I asked the *munshi* how it was that he, who resented the arrogance of Europeans so much, was so insulting in his behaviour to the poor sweeper; and he explained that the latter quite understood their respective positions, and did not expect a high-caste man to run any risk of touching him, well knowing the penalty of fine and troublesome purification which would be thereby entailed.

On the railways alone, where no provision is made for different castes, does the Brahmin run the risk of encountering such contamination rather than pay the extra charge for a first-class ticket, with which he would probably have little difficulty in getting a compartment to himself. The old story will bear repeating of how a great observer, on observing the following incident, prophesied the breakdown of the caste system by the railways when first opened in India: A Brahmin was standing at the door of a carriage filled with low-caste men, gesticulating and trying to persuade them to leave the compartment, when along came the European guard, anxious to get his train off, and inquired into the cause of dispute. Cutting short the Brahmin's explanation with 'Hang your caste!' or something like it, he pushed him into the carriage, banged the door, and started the train.

In these days of religious controversy, conscientious objections to vaccination, and reluctance to kissing the book, it is refreshing to recall the broad-minded views of John Chinaman on the last-named subject as expressed in the court at Singapore. In that colony natives of southern India generally take an oath by killing a fowl, Chinamen by breaking a saucer, Englishmen on the Testament as at home. Our friend John, however, on being asked how he would be sworn, replied: 'Kill im cock, break im saucer, smell im book—all the same!'

With us it is considered the height of bad breeding to hint in any way that you are tired of the society of a caller, and wish to cut short his visit; but in India when a native calls upon a European he expects to be told when he may go; in fact, he waits till he is told '*Ruksut hai*'—that is, 'You have my permission to withdraw.' Once I had a call from a native doctor, a highly-educated and superior man; but I was not aware of the etiquette on the subject, and the poor man sat on for two hours, looking most uncomfortable, while I wanted to go to attend to various matters; and it was only when my

visitor saw the preparations for my dinner nearly completed that he managed to go away. An officer once called upon a petty rajah, who, assuming a rank above that of his visitor, tried to dismiss him with a '*ruksut*,' when the officer naturally became very angry, and, after giving free utterance to his sentiments, declared his intention of staying as long as he chose.

We are rather proud of the beauty of our wives, and like our friends to admire them; but in India a rich man when travelling, and obliged to let his wives out of the zenana, to prevent any other man seeing them has them carried about, even in the hottest weather, in completely closed sedan-chairs, and with their entire heads and bodies covered with a thick cotton garment, only peep-holes for the eyes being left. If a low-caste Hindu finds his wife given to flirting, he cuts off her nose to render her less attractive; while, until lately, as soon as a Japanese woman got married she had her pretty white teeth blackened with some corrosive preparation of iron, which, however lively she might be, did away with the likelihood of any man wishing to make love to her.

I was once talking to a native in India, who informed me he had two wives. I remarked that they would probably be jealous of each other; and, on his assenting, I asked him how he managed when they quarrelled. He replied without hesitation or embarrassment that he then gave them a real good thrashing. I could not help admiring the virtue of such a method of treatment; for, as 'a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind,' the ladies no doubt, when they became companions in misfortune, would feel drawn together and inclined to forget their little differences.

With us a large family is generally considered somewhat of a misfortune, and a man is anxious to save money to leave to his children; but in the East it is still true that 'blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them.' A man in work will always support not only his parents but all his poor relations. In the vast continent of India, with its teeming population, mostly miserably poor, so that it is considered affluence to be able to afford to eat twice a day—where there are millions who never know what it is not to be hungry—there is no such thing as poor-law relief. One's poorest servants, who live and keep a family on from six to ten shillings a month, always have some poor relations hanging on to them; who lie doing nothing all day, but are always welcome to a share of the scanty dinner when it is ready. Once, talking to a Japanese, I asked him how he would do when he got too old to work; when he pointed with pride to his happy children running about, and intimated that he had sons whose privilege it would be to keep him in his old age. Of course it is well known that in China

this feeling is carried still further, so that the son worships his father. Thus it is of the greatest importance for a Chinaman to have a son to carry out the proper rites for him on his death; he only values his wife if she gives him a son, while daughters are very often cast out to perish at birth, or sold to be brought up to a life of degradation and shame.

An incident once happened showing a curious way of looking at things on the part of several people. A doctor was summoned hurriedly to visit the child of a native soldier in Ceylon. Before he could reach the 'lines' he was met by some one who said he need not go, as the child was dead. Some days afterwards he received an anonymous letter to say that the child had been murdered, and was buried under the hut of its parents, while a mock funeral had been held, and a doll buried in the usual burial-ground. The doctor took the letter to the magistrate, who pooh-poohed the thing, but told his police-sergeant to make some inquiries. This latter official found that a doll had actually been buried; and, on approaching the hut of the parents of the child, surprised an old woman running away with something which, on examination, proved to be the decomposed body of the infant, which she had evidently just extracted from a hole in the floor of the hut. When the matter was thoroughly sifted it was proved that there was a company of strolling jugglers in the place at the time, and that these people were always anxious to get hold of the skull of a first-born son for their tricks and incantations. Now, this child was a first-born son; and when it was likely to die, the parents heard that the jugglers proposed to exhume the body and steal the skull. Instead of invoking the protection of the law, the poor father and mother of the child tried to prevent the mutilation of its body by the subterfuge above described, while the jugglers, in revenge, wrote the anonymous letter in the hope of getting the infant's parents into trouble. The distrust in the power of the law to protect them is very general among the inhabitants of India, and is due partly to the race having lived for many generations under alien and oppressive conquerors, and partly to the corruption and extortions of the subordinate (native) officers of the law at the present time.

Another incident occurs to me as illustrating this point. A friend, an officer in a native regiment, was obliged to march with his sepoy through standing crops during some manœuvres. He observed the owner of the field wringing his hands, and evidently in great distress at the damage done to his corn; he kindly spoke to the man, and told him he could get full compensation for any damage by applying to the proper official. 'Ah, sahib,' said the peasant, 'your men may have done five rupees' worth of damage; but it

will cost me ten rupees in bribes before I can come before the Commissioner Sahib to state my complaint.'

These few anecdotes may serve to show that we must not always think our way of acting and

looking at things is necessarily the only one or the best; and that, before condemning others as uncivilised or ignorant, we must remember that their circumstances and education are very different to ours.

THE SILVER LINING IN THE CLOUD.



HE paused for a moment, holding the bonnet at arm's-length and regarding it critically. The old woman at work at her knitting stopped too, and eyed the girl half-sadly.

'Doesn't seem much improved—does it, Annie, my lamb? The ribbon's terrible stained inside as well as out.'

The girl smiled as she answered, 'Oh, never mind, aunty dear; it will do well enough this dull weather. Besides, who is to care except you and John; and you'll love me no matter how shabby my clothes are?'

The old woman muttered,

'What's that you say, aunty?' The girl's tones had sharpened: there was suspicion in them.

The old woman looked frightened; nevertheless she stood her ground firmly. 'I say men are finicky folk; you never know when you have them. They set a deal o' store by clothes'—

'But not John!—oh, not John! Why, aunty, are you forgetting how long it is since we became engaged? We're almost like old married folk now.'

'Love doesn't always grow warmer through keeping,' sighed the old woman.

'Doesn't it? You cross old woman! You've risen on your wrong side to-day.' And the bonnet was tossed aside, and the young arms thrown lovingly around the wrinkled old throat, and kisses showered on the hard-lined face. 'As if you could possibly know anything about it—you!—an old maid! Oh yes, all very fine—*kept them at a distance*—and, indeed, he would need to have been a brave lad who would have approached you!'

Then the light-hearted mockery left her tones, whilst her face settled to its usual gravity.

'It's true I'm but a poor working-girl, but some day I shall be a lady—and that day's not very far distant now; for lately there's a something come over John—he's not quite the same—seems preoccupied like, and asks what would I do were he to go away—would I follow him, or remain as I am? Follow him! I'd follow him to the ends of the earth and count it no hardship! No, aunty; John's not always to remain a poor doctor's drudge, doing all the hard and uninteresting work—out late at nights and early in the mornings, whilst Dr Spence takes his rest! No, he means to set up for himself; and he'll

earn his due. He has such a way with him, aunty. I saw him once when a lady fainted away at the studio. I never can think how a poor village lad has learned the trick! You'd never imagine but he was gentleman born. I'm trying hard to be like him. I watch the ladies as they come and go—the real ones—and copy their ways. Oh no, aunty, 'tis not *vanity*; 'tis that he may have no cause to feel ashamed of me.'

In spite of herself the old woman laughed, then sighed. 'You're just your mother's image, Annie! But please God your life may be a happier one than hers! Sometimes I wish we were back in the wee cottage again, though we worked hard and money was scarce. I'll never get used to Edinburgh ways, nor living like this cocked up in the skies!'

'It's the long stairs, and my being away so much!' sympathised the girl. 'You fret when you're alone. And we might easily have a better house; but you're so dreadfully stingy—though it's not for yourself, you dear old soul, you save, save, save! And John as would love me though I came to him in rags and with never a penny to my purse!'

Annie Baillie was an orphan, the child of a village girl who died in giving birth to her. The father's name remained obscure—at least to the village folk—for the poor girl had returned home only to die. It was then that the child's aunt came—a plain, hard-featured woman—leaving an excellent post she had held for years as housekeeper to a bachelor gentleman to mother the helpless babe. None save herself ever knew how hard was the fight waged betwixt her love for the dead and the pride of a righteous woman who ever kept herself respectable, ere the sacrifice was made. But memory, working back to dear dead days, conjuring up visions of a golden-haired sister, years her junior, who clung to her skirts as to a mother's, won the day, and from thenceforward the little stranger gained a place in her heart never to lose it.

All the woman's life was dedicated to the child's. From morning till night she slaved, without murmur, that her darling might lack for nothing, doing any job that came to her hand so long as it brought money. There was scarcely a lad in the village boasting a Sunday shirt but owed its purity and glaze to her.

But it was hard work! Not only was the

burden of the child on herself alone, but also that of its old grandfather too; for ever since his daughter's loss the fingers once so nimble at basket-work seemed to lose their cunning. Vain were it to lay before him his materials; he would only gaze stupidly at them, then turn his weary eyes away and stare morbidly into vacancy. For hours at a stretch he would sit thus, uttering no sound save for a chronic asthmatic wheeze which never left him till released by death.

But the child grew and flourished. In all that country-side there was not a prettier maid nor a merrier. An Edinburgh photographer journeying that way espied the girl in all the glory of her budding womanhood, and, keeping her in mind, later offered her a situation in his studio as attendant on his customers. It was accepted. Together, aunt and niece, with their humble effects, removed from the little home which had witnessed so many vicissitudes to take up their abode on the topmost story of a 'common stair' in the picturesque Old Town of Edinburgh, a locality once fashionable, but now gone down in the world, and relegated to humble folk like themselves. How lonely it was at first in the great town after the simple village life, where they were known and esteemed by all! For they knew no friend save one—a poor medical student fighting his way like themselves. He was the son of a small poultry-farmer in their village at home. Boy and girl he and Annie had been together, attending the same school and keeping abreast in their studies, till the boy leapt beyond her by gaining a bursary, which sent him to an Edinburgh school and later to the university.

John Haggart surpassed even his friends' highest anticipations, and not a few who watched his college course predicted the lad would yet make his mark. He had not long to wait for employment. A leading medical practitioner, in whose class he had been, gave him the refusal of an assistantship, which was only too thankfully accepted. Then it was that unspoken thoughts were clothed in words, and Annie Baillie received an offer of marriage—in the future. She was a good girl, and though loving the lad with all the warmth of an affectionate, generous nature, she nevertheless felt it her duty to point out, now that his foot was seemingly firmly planted on the high-road to success, that she was no fit mate for him. But the young man would not listen. Would she blight all his future, he asked, for ideas so purely chimerical? No other woman had ever been in his thoughts, nor ever should! Did she persist in saying him nay, then indeed would life stretch before him a vista of hopelessness. To do him justice, at the time he believed his words; small wonder, then, that Annie should do so also. That was four years ago, and yet John Haggart was still a bachelor; and Annie, as of old, going to and fro at her daily vocation at the photog-

rapher's—with how heavy a heart not even the old relative, whose pride she was, ever guessed, for the girl bravely hid her feelings under a smiling exterior. But the old woman was growing anxious; the young man was earning enough to set up in a modest way, and Annie had no extravagant tastes; indeed, if anything, erred on the side of an over-carefulness.

One day she secured her opportunity. The doctor had called, and—Annie happening to be out—she took advantage of her absence and spoke out what was in her mind. He feigned surprise that she should doubt him, and seemed hurt thereat. His love, he assured her, was warm as ever; only, a doctor's career depending, as it did, so much on external circumstances, he deemed it wiser not to marry until he could set up for himself and maintain an establishment befitting a well-to-do physician; and surely she would be the last to urge him into a position he could not uphold.

The argument seemed to have weight, and the old woman's words forsook her before his greater fluency of speech; but no sooner had he left that humble apartment than the old doubts rose again, and with even greater intensity; and, amid them all, the face of her dead sister, as she saw it in that last sleep, deaf to the wailing of the poor little unwelcome babe. To-night the old dread was with her again as she looked at Annie, for the face in repose had lost its look of youth, and the girl seemed dull and fagged, as with listless fingers she stitched at her bonnet.

It was striking nine from the church tower at the end of the street. If John were coming he would be soon now, and he had written Annie to expect him.

'Is the parlour redd up?' she asked of the girl, who had lapsed into thought.

'Yes.'

'An' the kettle on the hob? Maybe John will fancy a cup of tea this cold night; the wind's gay high.'

'He never takes tea here now, aunty; 'tish't good for him, he says. But listen!—yes, 'tis John's step!' As she spoke the bell pealed out, and the girl sprang to open the door.

'John!—how wet you are!—such a night!'

'Annie, for goodness' sake shut the door! You'll rouse the whole stair.'

The girl's face fell; a chill was at her heart. Never had he spoken to her so impatiently before. Something must be troubling him. Silently she led the way to the parlour. He halted on the threshold. 'Is the old woman there?' he whispered.

'No; she is in the kitchen.'

'Keep her there, then, Annie—a bit,' he said. 'I've something of importance to speak to you about.'

After all, perhaps she had been mistaken. An opening might have turned up—the long waiting

and the doubts which would come sometimes were maybe to end. She could almost hear her heart beat; her head throbbed and her throat seemed like to burst. She left him a moment and entered the kitchen.

'Leave us alone a bit, aunty,' she said to the old woman. 'John has some news for me.'

'Bless the bairn!' fervently ejaculated the elder woman. 'An' it's to be hoped the news is good.'

But Annie had disappeared. John Haggart still stood by the fireplace, his arm on the chimney-piece. As she came close beside him he turned to her a troubled-looking countenance. The news was not good, then.

'What is it, John?' she whispered. 'Don't be afraid to tell me. Remember the old days when you used to say troubles only wanted telling to become lighter. You said my sympathy helped you. Things have not changed, dear—not with me anyway.'

'Annie, Dr Spence's brother is dead—away down south, you know?'

'Yes?' she whispered.

'He's been ill some time, you know; but they were not prepared for this. The practice is a good one. Dr Spence says he can work it for me. The other fellow there is not popular. My being with Spence gives me a pull over the other. But it is a case of deciding *now or never*.'

'And why should there be delay, John? Or is it you feel a country town practice is shelving yourself?'

'Oh no, Annie. I'd only be too glad to step into a ready-made thing like that. It's the conditions. They're hard, Annie—very hard.'

She knew it now. Barbara—Barbara Spence. She had known it all along; but in the hopelessness of despair tried, though vainly, to blind herself to a fact only too apparent. Barbara—the dead doctor's only child—a sentimental, wilful girl, who, on a visit to her uncle, had given—yes, *given* unsought: Annie was sure of that—her heart. It required but a word from John, dropped every now and again, though he was scarce aware of it, to show how matters stood. The poor silly girl remained faithful to her fancy, even though hurried from place to place. Change of scene was of no avail; they had tried all—gay watering-place, Swiss mountain and chalet—and still she fretted and pined. But Annie might triumph still, for John was not dead to all sense of honour, and she could hold him to his word. But then where should they be?—blighted prospects, disappointed hopes, Dr Spence's influence gone, and she the millstone around his neck. Her resolution was taken. As she spoke, it seemed to her she tolled her own death-knell.

'I can guess the conditions, John. But are they so hard to you? Are there no advantages?'

She could not command her countenance; she turned from the flickering jet of gas that he might not see her pain.

After all, he thought, she did not care so very much; he was relieved, yet half-disappointed.

'Of course there's an advantageous side as far as worldly wealth goes—as men count success. But it's not what we pictured, Annie—not like the old days!'

'Oh John!' she wailed, 'be merciful. I cannot bear it!'

'Annie, my poor girl!' and now he was kneeling beside her, as she sat buried in the old arm-chair, her face hidden in its faded chintz. 'It was none of my seeking—nor his—her father. He looked higher—he had other views; but we were thrown together, and she was his idol. There are conditions in the will. She is light, Annie; not a sober girl like you. He feared she might meet, when he was gone, some fellow who would marry her for her money. I—even I—was preferable to that. You see how I'm placed, Annie. It isn't the practice, Annie. I only started with that. It was so hard to tell you. We shan't, probably, land there at all. Loudon Spence talks of the "top of the tree," and all that nonsense. No, Annie, don't turn from me! Say you forgive me, if only in memory of what has gone!'

Her voice sounded strange and unlike her own as she answered him, facing round with drawn, pallid features, and eyes from which all hope and light had fled.

'I can understand it all, John. You are free. And maybe, had not even she come between us, things could never have been as once we imagined. We were both poor and unknown then, but you've grown beyond me; a poor girl can't rise as a man does. I'm just where you left me in those old days, only older and sadder, a poor broken thing with no spirit left in me. We could never have mated; you'd have been ashamed of me. No, no, don't blame yourself, John; it's life—we're of an unlucky stock—poor mother! It's aunt as will feel it hardest; if she'd died last winter, when she'd the bad attack, I could feel thankful now.'

'I'm a brute, Annie—a cruel, heartless brute! But say the word and I'll stand by you for ever.'

'The word, John, must be Go. The hardest word of all—good-bye. It's come to that, and we'd best get it over.'

'I can't, Annie; indeed I can't.'

But she stood up and bravely held out her hand.

'Not like that, Annie. One kiss, dear?'

'No, John; all that is past and done with for ever. You belong to Barbara now. And apart from that, I owe it to myself—to keep still a little self-respect—to feel when the days are dreary and empty, that anyway I haven't got the heart-ache, too, of having parted with all maiden modesty. But I wish, John, you'd treated me fairer. Even in the telling of this you couldn't start fair, but must needs make-believe it was on account of the

business—and stepping into the dead man's shoes. You're overcome now, seeing me like this; but it'll pass, John, it'll pass, and you'll be happier with your Barbara than ever you'd have been with poor Annie.'

She gently pushed him outside the door as she finished speaking, and left him no further chance of justifying himself. Like a felon from the dock he slunk away with downcast head; the girl had risen in his estimation higher than ever she was, even in those old days when his love was at its hottest.

In the kitchen the old woman sat by the fire; as Annie entered she looked up interrogatively. One glance at the girl's face was enough; it needed not the broken words to tell her the end had come. 'It's all over, aunty; I'm a poor forsaken woman, of no account to any one!'

'But all the world to your poor old aunty. God help you, Annie, my bairn! It's a cruel, unjust world. It's the wicked as flourishes in it!'

'We'd best get to bed, aunty. To-morrow's a busy day at the studio.'

Silently they crept away—two forlorn-looking women. Scotch to the backbone, chary of speech and reticent of thought where their hearts were most affected, no other words passed between them that night; only, as the hours slipped by, and even till the dawn broke, the elder woman heard every now and again the girl's pitiful sobbing and low moaning.

It seemed but the wraith of the old Annie who presented herself at the studio next morning. At a glance the photographer saw the bomb had fallen. He had been expecting it for long; it came upon him with no surprise. For the girl, as the years went by and she stood higher in her master's confidence, felt it was but honest she should tell him something of her history and how affairs stood betwixt her and John. Later inquiries made by himself showed him but too plainly how frail was the foundation the poor girl had built her hopes on. Many a day he had pictured the shattering of them, and rehearsed the words he would use to comfort her. And now the day had come, and he could only remain silent. The look of patient suffering on her face was harder to witness in its quiet resignation than would have been open rebellion, and made him dumb too.

The forenoon passed. It had been a busy one, and now came an interval, the hour she usually ate her dinner; but to-day the little basket was forgotten—she had no appetite for food. Instead, she sat idly by the window watching the passers-by on the crowded thoroughfare below. Her heart was no longer with her work; she had no sympathy with the gay butterflies of fashion whom it was her duty to attend to, to arrange artistically or wait patiently beside them

as they gazed at themselves in the glass altering and realtering their locks ere their vanity was satisfied. Once she had enjoyed it, when she was happy herself and full of hope in the future. But that time had passed long since, and now had come a stage when she positively loathed her duties; she was too out of touch with her surroundings to dissemble her feelings, try as she would. She did not hear the door open, nor the photographer's step till he stood beside her; and then with a start she arose, knocking over, with the movement, a vase of greenery. 'I'm very clumsy to-day, sir,' she humbly apologised. 'I don't feel quite myself.'

'You've had bad news, perhaps?' ventured the photographer.

'Ay; the worst.'

'The worst, my girl, has been known sometimes to turn out the best.'

'For the one party, maybe, sir; I'd wish it might be so. But for me—no. I'd built too much on the future, sir; it frightens me now to look ahead. I don't know how the days are to be lived through!'

'Don't think of them, Annie. Try to bear your sufferings nobly. It's half the battle. After the storm there must come a calm. It's too soon to talk of "coming into port" yet; but there's a haven waiting for you any day you choose to seek it—a sure haven, Annie.'

'What sort of a *haven* will that be, sir—the other world?'

'Well, no, Annie; although I hope we are all journeying there. It's the earthly home I allude to. I had not meant to speak so soon—for it's ill work pressing a poor girl when she's down. But by-and-by, Annie, perhaps you'll think it over? You'll find me always the same; and a home ready for the old woman too. It's a bonny wee house, and the train passes handy; almost like the country, Annie; and you'd like tending on the flowers.'

'It's not my loss that I fret after, sir, and the prospect you hold out is a tempting one; and I haven't worked under you these four years and more not to know I may trust your word and you'd treat me fair. It's—well, it's just this way, sir: I'd only be taking a false advantage of your good nature coming to you a poor heart-broke creature with nothing to offer in exchange'—

'The balance will be equal enough, Annie.'

'Oh, no, sir!—a poor feckless creature—a piece of goods you'd best keep clear of, for our family's been none too lucky. I'll bring you no good. I must just pull myself together and ask you to be kind enough to help me to some employment away from here.'

'I'm willing to risk the ill-luck, Annie; I'd risk more than that. And I'll find you employment too for a bit—a poor farmer's wife that wants a "mother's help" to tide her over

a period of delicate health, and to look after the children. You're just the woman for that, Annie. There's nought like witnessing the sufferings of others to lighten our own. The country sights and sounds will do you good, and bodily toil will leave little time for mental. Just put me out of your mind and leave your poor brain alone.'

'I'm grateful, sir—very grateful! And I'll promise to work hard and try to give satisfaction. But to *forget* you, sir—that won't be so easy; kindness such as you've shown does not come every day; only, if I accept the one, it seems but fair'—

'No, no; we'll put that on one side just

now. We'll not court trouble. And I'm not the man to reproach you if, later, you can't see your way to acting as I'd like.'

'You're a good man,' she sobbed—'a very good man! If the world held more of your kind there would be fewer broken-hearted women. There's been dust in my eyes, sir—I've not seen clear. It's true what you said, our troubles are often our blessings in disguise. It's like poor aunty when she had the cataract. The operation was cruel hard; but she sees clearly now—better than she's done this many a day. My cure's a hard one, sir. I'm not through with it yet; but in the distance I see the light—the silver lining to the cloud.'

INKLESS PRINTING: ITS ADVANTAGES AND POSSIBILITIES.



REFERENCE has previously been made in *Chambers's Journal* to the process employed by the Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate, Brixton, by means of which a print is obtained by electricity on a special chemically-treated paper, the type and machinery being identical with that used in ordinary printing, with the exception of the inking mechanism, which is in this case dispensed with. Although the process has only been before the public for a short time, great interest has been manifested in it by many of the leading journalists and printers throughout the country; and a considerable amount of capital has already been sunk with a view to more extensive developments. Exhibitions of the machinery in operation have been given to the printing trades in London, and have been attended by representatives of the London and provincial newspapers. While it has been claimed by the exhibitors that the results obtained only represented the initial stages, rather than the finality of the process, many of those present agreed that there were great possibilities in the application of electricity to printing purposes. Many misleading statements, however, have been published from time to time regarding the process; and it is proposed in this article to give a brief outline of the methods employed, and to institute a comparison between the new and old modes of printing, from the standpoints of efficiency and economy.

The patents connected with inkless printing were taken out in 1898 by Mr W. Friese-Greene, a well-known inventor, whose name is associated with the biograph and many photographic processes. Although the principle upon which the process depends is by no means new, its application to printing is highly ingenious and decidedly novel. In the main, inkless printing depends

upon the fact—discovered in the early part of the present century—that certain substances are broken up into their constituents by the electric current. For example, if we place the wires from the terminals of a battery in a solution of blue vitriol, a current of electricity will pass through the liquid, and a deposit of metallic copper will make its appearance upon the wire connected with the zinc or negative end of the battery. Under similar circumstances nitrate of silver will yield metallic silver, salts of gold deposit metallic gold, and so on. It is this effect of the electric current which is utilised in electroplating, the article to be coated being connected with the zinc end of the battery and immersed in a solution of the metal it is desired to deposit.

Let us now endeavour to follow the splitting-up of a substance by electricity as applied to printing. If a piece of paper be steeped for a short time in a solution of nitrate of silver, and placed while still damp upon a flat metal plate which is connected to the carbon or positive end of a battery, we shall find that on touching the upper surface of the paper with the wire from the zinc or negative end a black spot will appear. If the wire be drawn along the paper its path will be marked by a black line; and in this way so-called 'electric writing' may be executed. If a coin be taken and pressed down on the paper, and touched for a short time with the wire, a black impression of the coin will be formed; and similarly type or blocks yield an impression. The explanation of these results is simple. Where the wire or type touches the paper an electric current passes from the plate below through the paper, and in its passage splits up the nitrate of silver. A small deposit of metallic silver—as in electroplating—makes its appearance at the surface of the type, but clings to the paper upon which the type

is impressed. No current passes through the portions of the paper where the type is not in actual contact; these portions therefore remain clean, and a sharp black outline of the type or block is consequently formed. The under side of the paper is also unaffected. To those who are only acquainted with silver as the white metal used in coinage, &c., it should be explained that most metals when in a fine state of division are black—hence the black print obtained. The application of this experiment to printing by machinery is not difficult. The inking rollers are removed, the frame containing the type is connected to the negative end of a battery or other source of electricity, and the bed of the machine upon which the paper is placed is connected to the positive wire. The impression is regulated by packing the bed of the machine, where required, with thin lead-foil. An ordinary printing-machine thus modified is all that is requisite for the inkless process.

The principle underlying electrical printing, therefore, depends upon the decomposition of substances by electricity, or what is known as 'electrolysis,' which will always be associated with the great name of Michael Faraday, who was the first to thoroughly investigate the subject. Viewed from a purely scientific standpoint, this application of electrolysis is highly interesting, and quite in keeping with the spirit of progress characteristic of the times. When we consider the commercial aspect of the question, however, the case is somewhat different, and the extent to which the new process is destined to supersede the old depends upon the considerations it is now proposed to discuss.

First and foremost, it may be safely assumed that electrical printing, to be successful, must be at least as cheap as the ordinary method. Whether this will be the case or not depends entirely upon the cost of the paper containing the requisite chemicals. All experiments point to the fact that a considerable quantity of the printing medium must be contained in the paper to yield prints of sufficient intensity; it therefore follows that this ingredient itself must be very cheap in order that the cost of paper may not be materially increased. We have mentioned nitrate of silver as a chemical which gives a black print for experimental purposes; as a commercial competitor to ink this substance would be entirely out of the question. Not only is it far too costly, but after a time it imparts an objectionable colour to the paper. Of the numerous substances tried very few indeed possess the combined qualities of cheapness and the production of a permanent black print without tinting the paper. At present a mixture of certain organic bodies known in photography as 'developers' with alkaline salts is used by the syndicate, the paper to be printed on being soaked in a solution of these substances, or they are incorporated in the pulp of a hand-made

paper. These chemicals yield a satisfactory, and to all appearance permanent, black print. The difficulty of producing a cheap paper, however, does not end with the discovery of suitable materials; for the introduction of these in sufficient quantity in the ordinary operations of a paper-mill presents almost insuperable difficulties; indeed, it is almost safe to assert that a special method of paper-making will have to be devised to meet the requirements of the new process. How these matters will work out from an economic standpoint time and experience alone can show; but unless this portion of the problem can be satisfactorily solved, inkless printing can never receive more than a limited application.

Another difficulty presents itself, however, in addition to the foregoing. In the vast majority of cases, if not in all, it has been found that, whilst a substance may print well when the paper containing it is damp, no satisfactory result has been obtained when perfectly dry. This is only to be expected, as dry paper serves almost completely to stop the passage of an electric current. Whilst the use of damp paper may be allowable for many purposes, it would obviously be a great drawback to the general adoption of inkless printing if a printer were compelled to damp his paper on every occasion he desired to print. If the new process is to compete commercially with ink, a cheap paper which may be printed upon quite dry is an absolute necessity.

Assuming, however, that such a paper will ultimately be forthcoming, what advantages are possessed by the electrical process over the ordinary method of printing? First of all, there would be a considerable saving in the prime cost of machines, which are much simplified when shorn of the inking mechanism. The process, in addition, is extremely clean; the cost of electricity used is no greater than that of the ink required for a given amount of printing; the type is always clean and ready for use, and the wear and tear it undergoes is less than when ink is used. The machinery could be driven at a greater speed, although it still remains to be demonstrated that extremely high speeds would yield dense prints by the electrical process.

Against these advantages we have to consider that inkless printing at present offers no substitute for printing in colours. It is true that brown, red, or blue prints may be obtained electrically from different chemicals, but a paper soaked in one kind yields one class of print only, and to produce two colours on the same paper would require a second soaking. This operation would absorb too much time and labour to be a successful rival to coloured inks; and it would appear, therefore, that the new process could never entirely supplant the old. Further, few printers have sufficient knowledge of electricity to be able to remedy the little breakdowns which are bound to occur even with the most perfect machinery.

And, lastly, evidence should be forthcoming that the prints will not fade, nor the paper show signs of deterioration, after the lapse of a number of years. Where the process, if successfully worked out, could be applied to advantage would be in the printing of newspapers and journals where only one colour is used. Printing-ink, however, is an old and well-tried servant, and printers will be well advised to make sure that the substitute is

equally efficient in all respects before abandoning that which satisfies their present requirements. The Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate are sparing no expense in their endeavours to bring the process to perfection, and it is quite possible that careful and continuous scientific investigation may overcome the difficulties enumerated, just as, in the past, sustained effort has solved problems of apparently far greater complexity.

POTEEEN-HUNTING IN THE WILD WEST OF IRELAND.



HIS wild west of Ireland is the natural home of 'poteen' or illicit whisky. This is because the loneliness and remoteness of the spots chosen for making it, almost inaccessible through the mountains

and bogs save to those who know something about the country, are all in favour of the smugglers escaping detection; whilst its network of mountain-lakes and small running streams affords the necessary cold water for condensing the distilled fumes into spirit during the cooling process. The report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for 1896 shows that the number of detections of illicit distillation was 1399—5 in England, 6 in Scotland, and 1388 in Ireland.

Dear beyond any 'Parliament whisky'—by which expression he denotes that sort more usually met with by my gentle reader: that sort, in fine, which has paid the tax imposed by the brutal Saxon Government—is this fiery fluid to the heart of every true peasant son of Connaught—and daughter too, for that matter, for the fair sex, especially if at all up in years, takes its fair share. And, in the interests of truth, it must be added that those who inhabit the coast-counties from Kerry to Donegal inclusive are also fully alive to its seductive merits. Indeed, many doctors (local, of course) will tell you that well-made poteen is better in sickness than the adulterated whisky usually met with in the small public-houses in this region of poverty; for in the Connemara country at any rate the illicit whisky is made of pure malt; though rumour has it that the less particular palate of Donegal, for instance, is satisfied with a fire-water mainly made from molasses, potatoes—ay, sometimes from almost any other rubbishy you please.

But to realise all the humour and wild, reckless spirit shown in prosecuting this precarious industry, one should take a hand in attempting to put down the traffic. Poteen-hunting is about as exciting as deer-stalking and fox-hunting combined, and there are great accompanying hardships to be endured. The best time to catch men making it is naturally about Christmas-tide or the New Year, when our northern winters are,

to say the least of it, inclement, and especially so, I think, in the mountainous west of Ireland, where rain seems to be the normal condition of affairs. Tremendous tramps through mountains and bogs (the latter often unsafe), and night trips of ten to twenty miles, with a snatch of sleep in an open boat, often in rain or frost, are generally necessary in order to reach suspected places undetected before dawn. I have seen a boat's crew after rowing in the darkness nearly all night, and striking on and shoving off from, one would think, nearly every submerged rock in the lake, find themselves at dawn near the spot where they first lost their bearings.

To begin with, I should like to give the reader a rough sketch of how the stuff is made: it is always called 'the stuff' in the trade. You first prepare your barrels of wash, or ground malt properly fermented, which you can test as to its fitness for distilling by throwing in a handful of dry oats, and seeing whether they sink or swim in the liquid. These barrels the police occasionally almost walk into, concealed on the islands by burying them nearly up to the top rim, and covering all with a few boards or poles, and with a layer of grass, &c., on the top. You fill your still with wash, and light a fire under it. The still is a huge round tin utensil, riveted and air-tight, with a convex bottom like a black bottle to concentrate the heat of the fire underneath, and narrowing at the neck, into which is fitted (and the joint also made quite air-tight) a worm. Now, a worm, which is worth three or four pounds merely as old copper, is a long pipe (spiral in shape to give as much surface as possible to the cold water outside), through which the fumes driven off by the heat from the confined liquor in the still must pass, and in which they are condensed by the external cold into liquid spirit, which is caught at the end of the pipe in a bucket, as it flows in a constant small stream. If this runs too freely the process is going on more rapidly than it should, and the fire must be lowered accordingly. This worm is submerged in a barrel of water, and a constant supply is necessary to keep the water in the barrel from heating, in which case, of course, the worm would

fail to do its work ; hence running water or a lake is necessary to the distiller. Tin worms flavour the stuff ; copper ones, which are expensive, do not. Once run through the still the liquor is called 'singlings ;' twice run through it is 'doublings,' or has been, as it is called, 'doubled,' and is the completed spirit. It is very raw and powerful, of course, much overproof, and has, especially when taken hot from the still, a very maddening effect. Some will tell you it has perhaps as much to answer for as the frequent intermarriage of cousins, and poverty, and hardship in causing the abnormal number of lunatics in the west of Ireland.

You can get poteen at about ten shillings to twelve shillings a gallon—that is, if you know your way about, and are not caught by the authorities. An idle scoffer once told me that the only two places where you could be really certain to find a drop of the best poteen in Ireland were the priests' house and police-barracks. Its flavour is smoky and indescribable, but not bad. The penalty for being in possession of it, making it, or being found at or near the place where it is being made, owning or having in possession any land or place where it is found, &c., is very heavy—one hundred pounds, which can be mitigated to six pounds, or three months' hard labour in lieu of payment. Also, everything concealing it, found packed with it (much, for instance, would go into Galway hidden in the middle of the loads of turf), or conveying it (as a horse or cart or boat) becomes forfeit, and if not sufficiently valuable to sell is destroyed on the spot. Every subsequent offence doubles the penalty on the previous convictions being proved ; so that a man twice convicted cannot be fined less than twelve pounds ; thrice, twenty-four pounds ; and so on. Consequently the places selected for its illicit manufacture are almost always on common land, little stony, barren islands, and such-like spots, useful to neither man nor beast for any other earthly purpose.

When made, men and women convey it to its destination in kegs containing several gallons each, carrying them on their backs by night across the bogs and through the unfrequented passes in the mountains ; and, in truth, it is wonderful how women can cross the rough country with such loads as are sometimes found on them. They avoid the main roads, a seemingly unnecessary precaution the casual visitor would say who drives mile after mile through wintry, forsaken Connemara without as a rule meeting a human being. Indeed, to realise the general desolation of the greater part of that portion of our empire you must remember the saying of the lady who remarked, when first the telegraph-poles were being put up there, that they would give the country quite a wooded appearance.

The poorest and most reckless of the peasantry

make the poteen, a middleman of some substance usually getting the lion's share of the profits, and paying for the materials and part of the fine that may be incurred ; the risk is borne mainly by those actually engaged in the manufacture, it being almost impossible to reach the real culprit who lures the poor folk into so much trouble.

Now that you know how to make this beverage, let us take a trip (for you, gentle reader, must come too), and see if we can find anything down a huge lake I wot of. It is some thirty miles long to travel, and at places nearly ten miles broad from the shore of one bay to that of the one opposite, and the whole is studded with rocky islands and submerged rocks—a lively place to navigate on a roughish night. These huge sheets of rocks have been perforated and eaten into holes by the water-action of ages, until they present a surface exactly resembling honey-comb. A few ragged cattle are ferried across to pick up a living on one or two islets where here and there grows a little rough grass, and to which the ownership or possession can perhaps be proved ; but the most are either bare rocks, or carry a rough growth of thorns, holly, or brushwood, which makes an excellent screen for concealing a still-fire or barrels of wash whilst fermenting.

We start off about ten or eleven at night, for there are ten miles to row before we get into the smugglers' happy hunting-grounds. The police have dropped out of barracks some time since, one or two at a time to escape any watch set on their movements, in their oldest uniform and any sort of ancient hat their fancy pleases—for the constabulary forage-cap would betray the boat to the smugglers before it got near enough for a dash at them. We have four men to row, a fifth for a change (indeed, we all take our turn at the oar), and a sixth in the bows with boat-hook, to look out for and to ward the boat off sunken rocks—often the place where there is most work of all to be done. Ten miles down, the lake narrows to half a mile and a ferry ; here a watch is often kept, so darkness and muffled oars are our best friends as we drop down, keeping well in mid-channel. A gun fired, or a galloping horseman, or a warning light flared across the water to the smugglers at work would spoil our chance ; and so we have previously told off a couple of police patrols at likely spots on the shore, so as to have a chance of arresting any one giving an alarm, or to intercept escaping poteen-makers, should we drive any ashore.

After searching a couple of bogs, unless we have some fixed destination, or get hopelessly entangled in miles of rocks, it is as well to get a sleep till dawn on some island near or in the boat, when all the police go under the sail, and keep pretty close together to keep warm, if it is freezing. Very little poteen, comparatively speaking, is made in summer.

Suddenly, however, we are on the alert for

a constable on the lookout has seen a suspicious light. It is a common custom in the west to burn a candle in peasants' cottages all night, partly from superstitious motives; and we can see some far off on shore. But the light we now watch is merely a very slight flare now and again. Some one has been stirring up the still-fire under the still, and is causing an occasional flash which can be seen in spite of the old sail, old sacks, or whatever other screen may have been used to hide the firelight. Now we row quickly and quietly up, then make a dash, as the smugglers, seeing or hearing our approach, rush to their boats and row like mad for the nearest shore. We strike into the track of one craft, which has perhaps been delayed by trying to hide a worm by sinking it, and on we go full speed through the rocks, sometimes right over a half-sunken ridge (and this is where real danger comes in), and gain rapidly with our four oars to their two. However, they know the bay, and we don't! Some of us shout and yell to imaginary police on shore to stop the pass, catch them at the point, or anything else we can think of to help to bewilder them, until at last, tired and confused, and possibly half-dazed with sampling the stuff they have been making, overboard they go to try and escape by swimming or wading ashore somewhere in the darkness, and getting off through the scrub. Overboard after them go a couple of the best of the police, with greatcoats, watches, and all on. One of them, who cannot swim, has a bad time, for the depth of water between the rocks is fifteen or twenty feet in places; and, missing the rocks, he is subsequently recovered with the boat-hook, having lost his quarry, who can swim. In the long-run we catch the father in the water; his son, we hear afterwards, was the man who was with him and escaped, and who, after spending most of a bitter January night wet through on a bare rock, went home to a rheumatic fever, which for months was near costing him his life.

Back to the still-fire and apparatus still working we row, and, raking up the fire again, make the singlings into doublings, and pour a little hot whisky (illicit) into the half-drowned smuggler and police, and dry their wet clothes as well as we can on the top of the hot still. No harm results. No arrests are made when men can be made amenable otherwise by summons; and after two more ordinary seizures next day, we row back again with a couple of captured boats or so in our wake, perhaps rowed part of the way back for us by the smugglers themselves. No resistance is offered, as the constabulary are men of splendid physique, and are also known to be armed on this duty. Indeed, in such a sportsman-like spirit do many of the poor peasants themselves take the game that they bear the

police little or no malice if the catch is a fair one; but woe to an informer should a country-side detect him! I have myself known a party of constables storm-bound in their boat, which they could neither leave nor get home, to be supplied with a cold goose and victuals by the very smugglers they came out to catch! Back we go, and I think that unless in the service, gentle reader, you will not go again; once is enough for pleasure merely.

The smoke and glare of the still-fire are usually the immediate cause of detection; and that reminds me that the neatest instance I know of an Irishman evading suspicion for a long time was by an unusually audacious plan. He took a house adjoining a police-barrack, and used an upstairs room as his distillery, knocking a flue into the police chimney. With water handy, and being on the best terms with the party, but naturally with a stand-off, distant manner towards them, he thus got rid of his smoke by their innocent and unsolicited assistance. The fire in a police kitchen in Ireland, you must know, is burning night and day, to warm and feed constant patrols going from and returning to barracks.

The Inland Revenue Department handsomely rewards poteen detections when prosecuted to a conviction, and thus adds an extra inducement to men to be always on the alert in the work.

Goat's-milk, fresh, mixed with poteen, is a highly invigorating beverage; but do not take too much of it! If you take a gun and lie behind rocks in the narrow mouth of a bay which is being searched in the early winter morning by the boat, you can get many a good shot at wild duck, teal, or widgeon, with which the waters teem, taking them as they fly out over your head when put up. In shooting-lodges on the indented Atlantic coast, indeed, you can hear sportsman speak of acres of teal or widgeon, and can see them too; but no cover may be available to get within shot for an ordinary gunner who has no duck-gun or punt. I have known a constable imitate and answer a seal's cry so well as to attract several of them round the boat in the semi-darkness near enough for a shot; but they sink in deep water, so we forbear from pulling the trigger.

Here is a funny poteen story, and then to bed. An Irish legal potentate, then Lord Chief-Justice, was entering his carriage at Galway railway station, and, tripping, dropped his black hand-bag. There followed a crash as of broken bottles, and a colourless fluid, gently trickling along the platform, revealed to the expert nostrils of his guard of honour of the Royal Irish Constabulary, drawn up in line and rigid at the 'present arms,' the unmistakable aroma of poteen. Tableau! What would you do in such a case, gentle reader, were you the police-officer in command?

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE.



THE British Association, meeting this year at Dover, have once more marked the world's progress in those matters which are commonly grouped under the word science. The President, in his opening address, drew an interesting comparison between the state of knowledge as it is now with that of one hundred years ago, and by way of illustration he pictured the town of Dover as it was in 1799, with its unlighted streets and its meagre cross-Channel service of sailing-vessels. He claimed that, although a most rapid advance had been made in the manufacture of weapons of precision, and in explosives, there was a deep undercurrent of influence sapping the very foundations of war, for the touch of science made the whole world kin. Even now arrangements were being made by which the leading academies of the world will, by representatives, meet at intervals to discuss questions in which the learned of all lands are interested, and he thought it probable that this first meeting would be held at Paris in connection with the World's Fair which is to be such a distinguishing feature of the close of the nineteenth century.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

At a time when the British Association have just been conducting experiments with Marconi's wireless system, and exchanging compliments with France, it is well to remember that as long ago as 1859 a Scotsman, by name James Bowman Lindsay, read a paper entitled 'On Telegraphing without Wires' before that same learned body. His system, it is true, differed from Marconi's, for he made water the conducting medium, and he actually suggested that it might be possible to speak to America by some such means. He conducted several experiments on the Tay and at Liverpool, and seems to have been the first in the field of wireless communication by electrical means.

GLASOGRAPHY.

The above title has been given to a German method of producing designs in transparent colours upon glass, which is said to be cheap and effective and eminently adapted to decorative purposes. It must be confessed that the common methods of imitating stained glass are not successful from an artistic point of view, while their durability is open to question. It is said that by the glasograph process an unlimited number of copies may be produced in one or more colours from any design, simple or elaborate, and that the tints do not lose their brightness through ex-

posure to light or by age. Glass tiles can be manufactured under the same process, and are said to retain their polish under all conditions.

AUTOMOBILES.

Mr Hiram Percy Maxim, writing in *Cassier's Magazine*, says that there are in New York about a hundred motor hansom and coupé cabs in public service, about twenty motor-wagons engaged in the delivery of merchandise, and between thirty and fifty private motor-carriages, usually carrying two passengers. In London it is calculated there are forty motor coupé cabs, and three times the number of private motor-carriages that there are in New York, and about as many motor delivery wagons. Paris has twelve public motor coupé cabs, many motor delivery wagons, and between three and four thousand of all types of motor vehicles. In London, Paris, and New York the public motor-hansoms are propelled by electricity, using electric storage batteries. In New York ninety-five per cent. of the private motor-carriages are so propelled. In Boston steam takes the place of gasoline. For short distances and light loads electricity more than holds its own; steam is found best for heavy weights and long distances; while for high speeds, long distances, and light weights the gasoline engine has proved the best. In America we find the lightest possible machine, carrying two people abreast. In Great Britain and the Continent one carrying four passengers is most common. The horse has long ago become accustomed to the cycle, but when suddenly confronted with a motor on a narrow road frequently attempts to bolt or jump over a hedge if not well held in hand.

STEEL FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES.

Industrial strikes generally do far more harm than good, and represent a loss to the community which cannot be recovered. But occasionally a strike will lead to the introduction of new processes and methods which prove to be of value. The recent plasterers' strike in this country has, for example, called attention to a method of employing metal fronts to houses, and as a substitute for lath and plaster ceilings, which has already been employed successfully in America. Our consul at Philadelphia expresses the hope, in which all will concur, that this new application of steel will be taken up by manufacturers in our own country.

ARTIFICIAL INDIA-RUBBER.

No natural product has tempted artificial imitation more than india-rubber, and many fortunes have been spent in such enterprises. Rubber

substitutes have, it is true, been produced which have proved of commercial importance, but no artificial substance has yet been made which exhibits the valuable qualities of that obtained from the rubber-tree. The demand for the article has enormously increased since the invention of rubber tires for wheels, to say nothing of the wants of the electrician; hence any new source of supply is of great importance. There is, however, always the hope that the real rubber may some day be produced synthetically in the laboratory; indeed, it has already been prepared in small quantities. Some time ago a hydrocarbon known as isoprene was discovered among the products of the destructive distillation of india-rubber, and later on the same substance was produced from turpentine. It has recently been found that isoprene kept for several years gradually assumes the qualities and appearance of true rubber. Chemists have now to discover a means of effecting the change more quickly, and a great and useful problem will have been solved.

THE MECHANICAL RAT.

Under this title a useful contrivance is described in an American paper, *The Railway Review*. Its purpose is to carry a cord through a sunken pipe or conduit, and it is in reality a tiny auto-car fitted with three rubber-tired wheels, and capable of travelling four hundred yards with one winding up of its mainspring. When started on its mole-like journey it carries its cord to the goal, when a stronger line is pulled through, which in turn is attached to the electric cable which is to find a permanent resting-place in the conduit. The 'rat' is no larger than the animal from which it takes its name, and can be easily carried in the pocket.

SCOTTISH AGATES.

An interesting and useful guide to the collection of Scottish agates, numbering about one thousand, gathered by the late Dr Heddle, St Andrews, now in the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh, has been prepared by Mr J. G. Goodchild, curator of the collection of the Geological Survey of Scotland. As the development of agates is scarcely dealt with in text-books of mineralogy, this handbook is of the more importance. Agates, we are told, are found in what were originally vapour cavities in eruptive rocks of andesite composition, the materials of which they are composed being derived from the decomposition of these rocks. Water percolating downward has dissolved their constituents; the nature of the solution is weak, watery, 'or much-diluted jelly, which gradually coagulates, and eventually passes into the solid state as the liquid solvent escapes.' The different films deposited vary according to the nature of the solution. The growth, colouration, and shape of the agate are traced and described. The

chief locality for Scottish agates lies on the north-west side of a line joining Tillicoultry and St Andrews, and coincides with the outcrop of the Old Red Sandstone lava of the Ochils and the Sidlaws. They are also found in the Pentlands, and less commonly in the Cheviots; and the experienced eye can detect at once the quarry from which they come.

POTATO PULP.

A Dutchman, J. Knipers by name, has patented a method of utilising the residues of the manufacture of potato flour. After straining this raw material and separating from it portions of peel and other impurities, it is treated with glycerine and dilute acid. The resulting compound is a gummy, viscous mass, which is carefully dried and reduced to powder. The next operation is to moisten this powder with a certain percentage of water and to press it into blocks, with the help of moulds if desired, the finished product being a homogeneous, wood-like solid with a metallic ring, which can be cut, turned, bored with ease, and will take the finest screw thread. It is believed that the material will conveniently take the place of wood, vulcanite, celluloid, and even metal for many purposes. It is said, moreover, to be an excellent insulator for electrical purposes. The cost at which it can be produced is not stated.

SKIN-GRAFTING.

Among the curiosities of modern surgical science is that of skin-grafting, a most remarkable instance of which was lately referred to by Dr Stewart M'Guire in the course of a chemical lecture. Some twelve months ago, the doctor reminded his hearers, he had performed the operation of skin-grafting upon a negro who some time before had lost his leg. The stump of the limb, instead of healing satisfactorily, exhibited a granular surface of about six inches in diameter, and it was determined that the defect should be made good by the operation of grafting. It so happened that at this time a white man had his leg amputated, and advantage was taken of the occurrence to borrow a section of skin from the white leg with which to patch up the black one, in the hope that the white patch would gradually darken. This hope has not been fulfilled, although the operation was perfectly successful, and the negro carries a white tablet which will identify him as long as life lasts. Once again truth is stranger than fiction.

RAISING SUNKEN VESSELS.

The art of the ship-raiser has of late years been brought to great perfection, and much ingenuity has been exercised in the various methods resorted to. A new apparatus has recently been patented in Germany by an engineer of Sonderburg, which depends upon the well-known fact that calcium

carbide will give off acetylene gas when brought into contact with water. The apparatus consists of a series of barrels or drums, each containing a tipping vessel filled with carbide. These drums are attached full of water to the submerged vessel, and a mechanical device causes the water to attack the carbide. By this means gas takes the place of water in the tanks, the liquid being forced out by pressure, and the sunken vessel is thus buoyed up to the surface.

A CURIOUS SALAMANDER.

Under this title is described in *Nature* an animal quite new to science which has recently made its appearance under unusual circumstances at San Marcos, Texas. Near that town the United States Fish Commission have established a station, and, owing to the uncertain rainfall, it was decided to bore an artesian well. Water was reached at a depth of 188 feet, and, to the surprise of the borers, the first rush brought with it a number of crustacea and the salamander in question. The creature is about four inches in length, with rudimentary sightless eyes; the skin is dingy white, and the exposed gills scarlet. It possesses four slender legs and feet, which are described as being startlingly hand-like, and the body terminates in a flattened tail, bearing a fin like that of the eel. The well is bored through limestone, and is believed to communicate with a subterranean lake.

ELECTRIC HEATING AND COOKING.

The possibility of heating houses and cooking by means of the electric current was long ago demonstrated, but the cost of such a convenience is prohibitive unless the current can be produced in a wondrously cheap manner. The system has, however, been adopted at the Carmelite Hospice which is situated on the Canadian side of Niagara River, about two miles distant from the falls, from which source the necessary energy is obtained. At the Hospice about one hundred horse-power is in use, twenty-five per cent. of which is employed for lighting and cooking, while the rest is devoted to heating the lower floor of the building. All good housekeepers must sigh for the cleanliness of such an arrangement: no fires to create dust and dirt, and a kitchen-range without black or smut—a range with a surface of six square feet, any portion of which can be brought to a dull or bright red heat by the action of a switch. Baking and roasting ovens are heated in the same way, and any surplus current goes to raise the temperature in a tank of water containing four hundred gallons.

THE UTILISATION OF SEWAGE SLUDGE.

At the recent Sanitary Congress the manager of the Dalmarnock Sewage Works, Glasgow, read a paper on 'Recent Developments in the Disposal

of Sewage Sludge,' which was of a very sanguine nature. He believes that the day is not distant when the solids extracted from sewage will be recognised by agriculturists as the globe fertiliser. Two years ago farmers would not take it as a gift, and now they are glad to buy it at one shilling a ton. The Dalmarnock Works have booked orders for eight thousand tons since June last, and an offer to take two hundred thousand tons for a period of ten years is now under consideration. The manager of the works stated that he had no hesitation in recommending the Glasgow Corporation to accept any such offer, even at the low price of one shilling to eighteenpence per ton, as he felt confident that in so doing they would finally settle the knotty question of disposing of the Glasgow sludge on the most satisfactory basis yet dreamt of by sewage engineers, chemists, or sanitarians.

POLARIS.

Not the least wonderful thing in modern astronomy is that, by means of the spectroscope, an observer can not only tell whether a distant star is approaching the earth or receding from it, but can calculate the rate at which it is moving. Professor Campbell, of the Lick Observatory, has recently reported that the Pole-star of the northern heavens is approaching the solar system at the rate of $11\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres (about seven miles) per second. He also from his observations deduces the circumstance that the star is not a single body but one of a pair. The companion star is invisible to us, but the two bodies revolve around their common centre of gravity in a period of four days, the orbit in which they move being comparable in size to that of our moon. It is also assumed that there is a third body which exerts an attractive force on the binary system, and that this attraction causes a periodical variation in the rate at which the Pole-star is moving towards us. The observations were made with a Mill's spectroscope in conjunction with the big telescope.

A MOISTENED WARM-AIR GAS-STOVE.

A gas-heating stove has been recently introduced, and described in *The Practical Engineer*, which heats by bringing a continuous supply of fresh air into a room, removing the vitiated air, and practically renewing the atmosphere in a room hourly. This removes the objection to gas-heating, which uses up the atmosphere and makes the air too dry for health. At the same time, by an ingenious arrangement for moistening, the moisture required by the air to render it suitable to breathe at the higher temperature is automatically introduced, and a uniform temperature is maintained in every part of the room, the parts farthest from the stove being quite as warm as those in close proximity to it. These advantages are effected by about a dozen

one and one-half inch or two-inch wrought-iron air-tubes being fixed vertically behind the gas-heated asbestos fire, connected to a tube plate at the top and bottom of the stove. The bottom of the stove below the bunsen burner constitutes an air-chamber connected with the outside air, either by a duct or by an opening in the floor under the stove, made by removing one or two tiles where the hearth is tiled, and air can be obtained from underneath the floor. When the stove is lit, as the tubes become heated by the bunsen flame and incandescent asbestos shells, the air in the upper portions of the tubes is rarefied and rises to the upper part of the room, diffusing itself along the ceiling and walls. A rapid warm-air current is thus set up from the stove, the fresh air from outside as it becomes heated entering the room and removing by displacement the vitiated air, which is continually escaping up the ordinary chimney. This stove, which is known as the Langfield Moist-air Heating Stove, brought out by Langfield & Co., Blackfriars Street, Manchester, cannot work where there is no provision for ventilation such as an ordinary fireplace.

OMNIA SANITAS!

Was it Lord Beaconsfield who, as Mr Disraeli, was once twitted with being the exponent of a 'policy of sewage'? According to Sir William Preece, no loftier subject can occupy the attention of man; and, according to him also, an ancestor of the great premier—Moses, to wit—was 'the greatest sanitary engineer the world had ever known,' and the Book of Leviticus was 'a treatise on hygiene.' The Jew was the healthiest and longest-lived type of humanity, and the doctrines of Moses could be summed up as the objects of sanitation to-day—namely (1) pure air, (2) pure water, (3) pure food, (4) pure soil, (5) pure dwellings, and (6) pure bodies. Pure air, he said, was to be found in lunatic asylums, jails, and workhouses; but not in our churches, theatres, railway carriages, or dining-rooms—even the dining-room of your 'dearest friend.' Sir William started what will be regarded as a rank heresy by many when he stated that it was a 'moot question' whether absolutely pure water was healthy, and that good drinking-water might contain as many as twenty bacteria per cubic centimetre; that five thousand tumblers of London water contained only one grain of solid matter, and the Thames valley ought to be able to supply London with excellent drinking water for the next fifty years—even with its present works. This is good news for London; but what will the London County Council and the Royal Commissioners say on the subject? Sir William advocates an 'auxiliary supply,' in the shape of sea-water, for street-watering and such purposes. But sea-water is said to be bad for roads and still worse for horses' feet, and its use is said to have been discontinued

even in seaside towns for this reason. For baths, however, it would be invaluable. Pure soil was not so easy a subject as it looked, and we had not got much beyond the experimental stage in this respect, although astonishing effects had been produced by the natural process of bacteriolysis. In regard to pure dwellings, the legislation of recent years had had a beneficial influence on the community by clearing away slums, building well-designed houses, and constructing new streets; and Sir William instanced the case of Edinburgh, which, by spending £560,000 in improving the housing of the poor, had brought down the death-rate from twenty-eight to seventeen per thousand. Electricity was to be the great regenerator of the future. Introduced into our houses, it was to purify the air and save our books, pictures, and curtains from deterioration; albeit there are many people who consider that curtains are a leading factor in insanitariness! It was to be a valuable aid in securing the much desiderated auxiliary supply of water, and it had already demonstrated its value as a sewage disposer in the Hermitte process, which had been introduced at Ipswich and in Netley Hospital. But above and beyond all, it was destined to extend the 'allotted span' of life from the Psalmist's 'three-score years and ten' to fivescore, and, in fact, to bring about a kind of millennium, in which everybody should be healthy, wealthy, and wise. In a word, as the *Times* remarked in a leading article on Sir William's address to the members of the Sanitary Institute at Southampton, 'there is nothing like leather.'

THE MALARIAL MOSQUITO.

As already indicated in the article, 'Mosquitoes and the Spread of Disease,' in this *Journal* for October, there seems no longer any doubt that malarial fever is transmitted by the agency of mosquitoes. Major Ross, writing to the secretary of the Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases, states that an outbreak of fever in the 3rd West India Regiment has been traced to the insect, a large species of *Anopheles*, and in the bodies of these insects the malarial germs have been actually found. Those who wish to acquaint themselves with the method of mosquito life, and the remedial methods which may be adopted to mitigate the pest, are referred by Miss Ormerod to the paper published a few years ago by Dr Howard, entomologist to the American Agricultural Department, an important part of which is the enumeration of the measures which may be taken to check the propagation of the insect. Infestation may arise from deficient sewage and sanitation arrangements. Kerosene will kill the mosquito on a small scale; but, dealing more broadly with the difficulty, the introduction of fish into fishless ponds is a better remedy. Fresh or brackish lakes and ponds near the coast should have canals in communication with the sea, so

that the water may become salt—salt water being fatal to the mosquito. The *Times* suggests that the destructive effects of the tsetse fly on horses may be due to some similar parasite.

RAILWAY SPEEDS.

Since the mad 'race to Aberdeen' of 1896, the English and Scottish railways have quietly settled down to a steady pace of something between fifty and fifty-two miles an hour. There are one or two short lines, such as that from Dorchester to Wareham, where a speed of sixty miles is attained, and from Forfar to Perth, where fifty-nine miles is the scheduled speed. But, generally speaking, anything over fifty-two miles is quite exceptional, and is only maintained for comparatively short distances. While England has been lagging behind somewhat, other countries have been forging ahead, and one is not surprised to hear that America claims to have the 'fastest regular train in the world.' But it is not a little surprising that this claim should be disputed by France, which only a few years ago was far behind our own country in the matter of fast trains. Mr W. M. Acworth, the great railway expert, writing from Denver, Colorado, describes a journey he made recently on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad to Atlantic City, in which the 'fastest mile' was run at the rate of eighty-one and seven-eighths miles per hour, and the average was over seventy-eight miles an hour! Atlantic City is the Brighton of Philadelphia, and Mr Acworth contrasts this performance with the sorry performance of our Brighton company, with its one Sunday express, Victoria to Brighton, fifty-one miles in sixty minutes, and its single week-day express, London Bridge to Brighton, fifty and one-half miles in sixty-five minutes. The American Empire State Express performs part of the journey from New York to Buffalo at a speed of fifty-seven and one-tenth miles an hour, the inclusive speed for the whole journey being fifty-three and three-tenths miles an hour. Against this the French claim that their Luxe Facultatif train from Paris, by way of Amiens, to Calais Pier, runs between Paris and Amiens at sixty and five-tenths miles an hour, and between Amiens and Calais at fifty-seven and three-tenths miles an hour, the inclusive speed for the whole journey being fifty-seven miles an hour. The highest speed attained on the local express between Paris and Bordeaux is fifty-eight and one-tenth miles an hour, and the inclusive speed fifty-four and two-tenths miles an hour. Against these our Scotch expresses cut but a poor figure, that by the East Coast only reaching a maximum of fifty-four and five-tenths miles an hour (between Grantham and York), and an inclusive speed of fifty and seven-tenths miles an hour. There is one consolation, however, that for long-distance runs—that is, 'breaks' of one hundred miles and upwards—England still holds the record, the system

of 'pick-up' water-troughs enabling the journey between Paddington and Exeter of one hundred and ninety-four miles to be performed without a stop. This is the longest run in the world; but it is closely approached by the North-western Company's American Liner Express, which performs the one hundred and ninety-three and a half miles between Euston and Edgehill, *vid* Runcorn Bridge, in three hours forty-five minutes, or a speed of fifty-one and sixth-tenths miles an hour. On the whole, the English speed suits the English people best, although one is surprised to hear that the French have made such strides in recent years.

DESOLATION.

NIGHT, like a pall, with stealthy speed,
Throws o'er the land its sombre frown;
Each darkening glen grows dark indeed,
And wind-blown rain comes beating down.

Gray mists, like shadowy phantoms, trail
Through ev'ry lone and eerie spot;
While ghostly voices moan and wail
Around the shepherd's lonely cot.

Along the wild and wasted shore
A howling gale sweeps fiercely by;
The waves leap in with deafening roar,
And looming storm-clouds fill the sky.

'Mid grim, dark woods, grown desolate,
The last leaves fly before the blast.
Decay and ruin reign elate,
And winter claims the land at last.

SAM WOOD.

READY DECEMBER 1, 1899.

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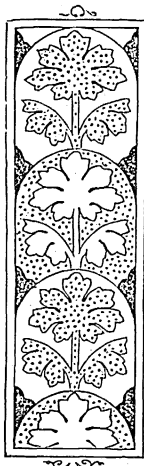
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The December part completes the volume of
Chambers's Journal for 1899.

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Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

COUNT PAUL.

By EMERIC HULME-BEAMAN.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.



CHARLES CUMBERLEGE had dined well; he had smoked his cigar; he had read the evening papers; and now he rose from his chair, stretched himself, and yawned. The clock that confronted him on the mantelpiece informed him that the hour was ten; he was in no humour for whist, and the billiard-tables were occupied. Moreover, he had to get home to Clapham; and the knowledge that the night was cold and damp struck a shiver of repugnance to his heart as he looked at the blazing fire before him and then at the inviting furniture of the club smoking-room. Again he yawned, flung away the end of his cigar, and, descending to the hall, put on his overcoat and left the club. The air that wrapped him round as he stepped into the street was charged with a penetrating damp; it settled on his cheeks with a clammy touch, and crept insidiously beneath his eyelids and made them tingle. He looked up, and knew that the hand of a London fog was laid upon the night. Between the twinkle of a lamp opposite and himself there loomed a shadowy object, taking shape slowly out of the mist; by degrees it assumed the form of a hansom, and he hailed it as it passed him.

'Victoria, sir? The night is a bit thick; but, Lord, it ain't nothing, sir. Down south of the water I'm told as it's a little foggy, certainly. But the fog is only a-beginning hereabouts. Piccadilly is as clear as your hand. Victoria? Yes, sir.'

'A civil cabman,' thought Cumberlege, leaning back in the hansom; then he smiled—for he was aware that civility in a cabman claimed its price. His train was on the point of starting as he walked on to the platform at Victoria. He opened the door of a first-class compartment and flung himself on to a seat; the compartment chanced to be empty, and, turning down the

collar of his coat, he thrust his hands into his pockets and closed his eyes. The train steamed out of the station with a brave show of determination, and was pulled up sharp by a fog-signal this side of Grosvenor Road. All round came the sound of intermittent explosions. The air was laden with the suggestion of a desultory fusillade; a man could fancy himself the advance-picket of a skirmishing party without violence to his imagination. Cumberlege's imagination played with the idea as he listened to the fog-signals, and pictured a night attack on the heights of Chitral. The train crawled forward for a hundred yards, and stopped again before the enemy's cannonade. Cumberlege worked out the whole scene of operations, and in his mind he planned a counter-attack and laid an ambuscade most delicately devised; till, finding himself in the act of storming the enemy's position, he fell asleep. He woke with a start as the train slowed into a station.

'This,' said he, 'is Clapham;' and pulling up his coat collar, he got out of the carriage. The station wore a strange air of silence, and a white curtain was stretched straight across his eyes, whichever way he looked.

'This,' said he, turning round in bewilderment, 'cannot be Clapham after all;' and he bumped into a porter.

'What place?' he demanded.

'Wandsworth Common,' replied the porter, and the next moment was swallowed up in the fog.

'Then I must have been asleep!' ejaculated Cumberlege. 'Wandsworth Common, and eleven o'clock! Not to mention the fog!'—He looked thoughtfully at the little red light, now disappearing like a tarnished disc in the whiteness, and wondered if it represented a real train or the ghost of one. Then he groped his way along the platform. A figure seemed to float past him. He stretched out his hand and gripped a man by the arm.

'I don't let go of you, my friend, till you take me out of the station,' he remarked pleasantly. 'You perhaps know the geography of the place; I don't.'

It was the same porter whom he had first addressed—the only porter, it would seem, on the premises, and a sleepy one at that.

'Come along, sir; this way,' said the man, steering an instinctive course through the void.

'Any train up to-night?' asked Cumberlege.

'Victoria? No, sir. Last train went ten minutes ago.'

'Where's the nearest cab-stand?'

'Half a mile off.'

'Direct me to it and I'll give you half-a-crown.'

The man considered, hesitated, agreed; and five minutes later the two of them were cutting their way through a solid wall of mist. Neither spoke. The porter walked forward mechanically. He had walked in the same way over the same ground any day for the past ten years, and was independent of the assistance of vision. Fortunately, the road was straight; yet to Cumberlege it appeared to be twisting into different directions at every step. Then he addressed his companion:

'Any chance of finding a cab to take me on to Clapham?' said he.

'Not much,' said the porter. 'It ain't a night for cabbies, this ain't. You *may* find one tramping round.'

'And if not?' thought Cumberlege, and an instant after heard the sound of wheels, and saw two little specks glimmering out of space.

'Luck favours me!' he exclaimed.

'Hi, there! cabby!' cried the porter.

There was the flick of a whip, and a cab steered its way slowly towards them.

'What bloomin' place is this?' called out a voice. 'I've lost my bearings, it seems.'

'Half-a-guinea if you take me to Clapham!' cried Cumberlege.

'Clapham. Yes, sir,' answered the cabman, with a quick relapse to professional alertness. Difficulties melted before the magic touch of gold.

'Get in, sir. A thick fog.—I say, Bill, where are we?' added the man in a muffled undertone to the porter.

'Arl a mile from the station anyway,' replied the porter. 'Turn your blessed cab round and follow your nose.'

The cabman winked; but he might have stood on his head and no one the wiser under cover of the fog. The porter pocketed the half-crown and vanished into the spectral night; the hansom swerved round and rolled off in the opposite direction, with Cumberlege inside; the fog weighed heavier. Presently the driver opened his trap at the top of the cab.

'Make it a guinea, sir!' he called through the aperture. 'It's a foggy night, and we're out o' the rady.'

'All right,' said Cumberlege; 'a guinea.'

The trap-door snapped to, and the cab rumbled on. It appeared to Cumberlege as if they were descending precipices; in front there was nothing but the impenetrable white curtain. Thus it may be they traversed a mile—it may be more—slowly and with occasional stoppages, and still the bottom of the precipice seemed not to be reached. At length the cab stopped once again, and this time there was a suggestion of finality about the action. The cabman clicked open the trap.

'I can't a-go no farther!' he shouted down. 'You must get out.'

'Confound you!' cried Cumberlege; 'what do you mean?'

'I mean as the fog is a bit too thick for anything but a scythe, and I ain't a-goin' to run my hoss into a brick wall to please nobody. Here I stays.'

'Where are we?' asked Cumberlege.

'I don't know, sir,' said the man.

Cumberlege got out. There appeared to be some excuse for the driver's lack of definite knowledge; Cumberlege was aware that the cab stood there, because he saw dimly burning the two lamps of the hansom; otherwise he might have been in the street alone.

'Have you followed a straight road?' he asked.

'As straight as the hoss knows how,' said the cabman. 'And I'd like that half-sovereign, sir.'

'We can't be far from Clapham, then,' said Cumberlege.

'About a mile, sir. You could walk it easy. Keep to the pavement, and feel along the railings. It ain't a night for driving.'

Cumberlege handed him a gold piece.

'I suppose you've done your best,' said he. 'Good-night. I'll try and ferret out my way.'

Five minutes of fruitless effort proved to him the futility of any such attempt. He lurched into lamp-posts, cannoned against palings, bumped into walls, and ultimately lost the pavement altogether. Moreover, he was possessed of an uneasy conviction that he had turned at least three corners, while aiming to go straight. Suddenly a step brought him into a clear space, where the fog had lifted. He saw houses opposite him, and, beyond, a lamp-post. He crossed the space and stood a moment pondering at the fringe of the fog, when he heard close by him the sound of voices. His first impulse was to call out and inquire his direction; his second was to draw himself stealthily within shadow of the railings of a house and listen. There was something mysterious, something surreptitious, about the tone of the voices as they came, muffled, to his ears through the intervening fog. The hidden speakers did not approach, neither did they recede; consequently they were stationary. Two men standing still in the midst of a fog and the midst of the night, talking earnestly together, was in itself a circumstance odd enough to excite a passing curiosity. Cumberlege drew a pace or

two nearer; the fog secured him from all possibility of detection, and he paused within five yards of the speakers. Then the consciousness of eavesdropping sent a flush to his cheeks, and he prepared to move on, when again he was arrested by the distinct utterance of a sentence.

'*C'est qu'il serait arrivé d'ici là,*' said one of the voices; and, continuing, in French: 'This cursed fog may have delayed him. Did you not fancy you heard the wheels of a cab pass the end of the street a minute or two ago?'

'I heard them,' said the other.

Now, apart from the fact that the men spoke in French, there seemed to Cumberlege something almost sinister in the significance of the words they exchanged. Here was a rendezvous—a rendezvous arranged by foreigners under conditions and at an hour most singular. Cumberlege stroked his beard and reflected: if there was mischief afoot he would best be serving the ends of justice by remaining where he was and ascertaining the nature of it. On the other hand, the situation was one of discomfort; his teeth chattered with the cold, the fog chilled his valorous instincts, and discretion pointed with convincing finger towards his own fireside. By this and that, it seemed to him the most sensible course to leave other people to manage their own affairs, and pursue his way homewards as best he might. As he was on the point of carrying this laudable resolution into effect the two figures advanced a few steps, along the pavement towards him, and once more stopped—this time so close to Cumberlege that by stretching out his hand he could have touched the buttons on the coat of the foremost gentleman.

'Without doubt she must be put to death,' said the first in a low, distinct voice.

Cumberlege felt his heart contract; he pressed his back against the railings and held his breath.

'I will see this through,' he thought.

'We can do nothing without the Count's sanction,' replied the second in an equally low, yet equally distinct, tone. 'Perdition take him for keeping us waiting!'

'For my part, I do not know him. I have not seen him.'

'Nor I. But I have seen his portrait.'

'I also. A tall man with a beard. But this lovely traitress'—

'Naritzka? Well, well! To kill a beautiful girl!'

'Name of God! Are you going to turn sentimentalist—you?'

'I keep to my oaths,' muttered the other. 'The Count is the head. The responsibility rests with him. Yet she is, as you say, lovely.'

His companion gave a short laugh.

'So was a Scottish queen; but it did not save her, *mon cher!*'

'It should weigh, one would think; there are not so many beauties in the world that— Ha!'

The speaker was interrupted in the midst of

his sentence by a somewhat singular thing. At his ear there had come, suddenly, a loud and clamorous sneeze—as it were from the very middle of the circumambient fog. Now Cumberlege, leaning forward to catch the words of the strangers more clearly, had been seized with an uncontrollable impulse to sneeze at the very moment when he least desired to; in spite of the most determined effort to suppress the inclination, the tickling that assailed his olfactory nerves was of so peremptory a nature that the sneeze had taken place even as he was in the act of congratulating himself on having successfully stifled it. He perceived that further concealment was impossible, and at the same instant formed his resolution. He had heard enough to persuade him of two things: one, that a lovely girl was in danger of her life; the other, that she could be saved by the authority of one man only. That man was due at the precise spot where he himself now stood, and, like himself, was tall and wore a beard. Cumberlege possessed the quality of decisive action. He rarely stopped to consider consequences when sudden emergencies made sudden demands upon his courage or resources. The conviction smote him that here was an occasion upon which to act was better than to reflect. He made a quick step forward and laid his hand upon the last speaker's arm.

'Gentlemen,' said he in French, 'I am here.'

'The Count!' cried both of them in a breath.

'Even so,' said Cumberlege calmly.

'We did not hear you approach,' observed one.

'You were too busy talking,' replied Cumberlege, 'and the fog perchance gets into one's ears as well as one's eyes. Mine tingle so that I would wish to reach the shelter of a house as soon as we may. Let us proceed, my friends.'

'Two to the left, one to the right—eh, Ivan?' asked the other of his companion.

'And the fourth house on the left,' replied Ivan.

'There is a light in the upper window. You see, we had to calculate our direction in the fog, Count,' he added, turning to Cumberlege. 'Had you much difficulty in finding the rendezvous?'

'Considerable difficulty.'

'But the directions were explicit!'

'Fortunately.'

The man addressed as Ivan had proceeded a few paces, with his companion and Cumberlege at his heels. The question that was uppermost in Cumberlege's mind as they walked shaped itself thus: 'Where is the *real* Count?' and close upon it another: 'If he should arrive too?' Finding no satisfactory answer to either, Cumberlege contented himself with following his guides through the fog. Ivan stopped.

'Here is the turn,' he said; 'one to the left.'

A few steps more, stumbling and groping through the thick curtain of the fog, and another turn was reached.

'Two,' said Ivan; and an instant after they had crossed the street.

'Count twenty paces,' said the second stranger. At the twentieth pace they stopped again.

'The street corner should be here,' said Ivan, pausing. 'Can you make it out, Bergstein?'

Bergstein—for this appeared to be the name of the second gentleman—passed his hand carefully along the railings of the houses; presently it slipped from the railings into space.

'This should be it,' he exclaimed. 'Yes, here it is. Now, look out for the light in the window.'

Three minutes later they had ascended a flight of steps leading to the door of a large house, and Bergstein pressed an electric bell gently. They were not kept waiting long. The door swung cautiously back on its hinges, and a man's voice demanded who were there.

'*Le Roi!*' replied Bergstein promptly.

This would appear to have been a pass-word, for without more ado the door was flung open and the three men admitted. Cumberlege found himself standing in a spacious hall, dimly lighted from above by a lamp on the landing.

'It is the Count,' said Ivan.

The man who had admitted them bowed low. 'Everything is ready, Monsieur le Comte,' he murmured.

'Then lead the way,' said Bergstein impatiently. 'Count, will you precede us?'

Now, almost for the first time, as he ascended the wide flight of stairs before them, it occurred to Cumberlege that he was doing a very foolish thing; for here was he, entirely ignorant both of the character of his associates and the nature

of the assembly to which they were conducting him, yet voluntarily assuming the rôle of their leader. Simultaneously, the thought of a maiden whose life was in peril fortified his resolution to entrust the issue to chance and his own wits; it was now too late to draw back. They had reached the head of the stairs. Their conductor traversed a corridor and tapped at a door on the opposite side of it. From within there came a murmur of voices; then the door opened and a flood of light burst upon the gloom, enabling Cumberlege to perceive, through the doorway, the interior of a large and brilliantly lit apartment. In it were seated some dozen persons, of whom a few were women. The entire company rose to their feet as Cumberlege, followed by his escort, entered. A man at the farther end of the room advanced to greet the new-comer, and, fixing his eyes upon Cumberlege, regarded him for a moment with a steady scrutiny. Cumberlege returned the stranger's gaze unabashed.

'Count Paul Rassovitch?' said the latter, bowing.

'You have named me,' replied Cumberlege haughtily, for he recollected that he was playing a part, and would require to adapt his bearing to his rôle. 'You have named me. And you, sir?'

A curious smile flitted for an instant across the stranger's mouth. He bowed again.

'Karamoff—at your service,' he said. Then, looking full into Cumberlege's eyes, he added: 'And what is our friend Lavtchok's message, Monsieur le Comte?'

THE SPECTRES OF THE GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN COURTS.



UMOURS having been whispered in Austrian Court circles—but which have assiduously been hushed up—of the appearance thrice of the spectre which portends woe to the imperial House of Hapsburg, the ghostly 'Black Lady,' in the corridor of the apartments of the hapless Empress of Austria prior to her terrible death, some reference to the spectres of woe haunting the royal families of Germany and Austria may be of interest. *En passant* may be mentioned that they are the supposed ghosts of departed ladies in 'black,' 'white,' or 'red' robes of the Middle Ages, who are supposed to have suffered a terrible wrong at the hands of some ancestor, for which they are casting a bane on the family.

The best known of these ghostly apparitions is the so-called 'White Lady' of the House of Hohenzollern, which haunts the old royal residence in Berlin, and the repeated appearance of which has been so oftentimes corroborated by the most reliable witnesses that it can hardly be

doubted. And here be it said that all the three emperors of the century have firmly believed in its apparition when Death stalks the ancient halls of the House of the Brandenburg Markgrafs. This was even the case with the broad-minded Emperor Frederick, who it may be new to learn was quite as superstitious as his father, and as, indeed, his matter-of-fact son, William II. This apparition has at various times been seen at the hour of midnight, dressed in a long white robe, flitting along the corridor of the chamber of death or sitting in the moonlight in the recess of a window. When approached, as some bold servants have ventured to do, it raises its right hand with a warning gesture, pointing to the chamber in question, and disclosing a marble-white face of exquisite beauty and youthfulness, but with eyes and mien of despair and woe. On the little finger of the right hand is a ring with blood-red stone of great lustre.

It is said, too, that the person thus warned will not see the year out.

In the present century there are several authenticated appearances of this spectre, notably on the

three nights preceding the death of the Kaiser William and of his son Frederick. On the latter occasion news thereof was in an instant brought to William II., who at once gave the most stringent orders to close all exits and make search everywhere in order to discover if it was some ill-timed bogus ghost; but of course nothing was run to earth by the terrified servants; and the Prince, with those concerned, then knew that this noble life was fast ebbing away, and he died within an hour.

The spectre is also reported to have appeared on the night before the then Crown Prince and Crown Princess's baby-boy and idol, Prince Waldemar, fell from the arms of his nurse through the open window of an upper story in the Berlin Schloss, and was killed on the pavement below. It is, by the way, curious that the 'White Lady' only appears at the death of a *born* Hohenzollern; for instance, there is no record of its having been seen at the death of the Empress Augusta, wife of the Kaiser.

Another ghost of the House of Hohenzollern, of which few have heard, is that of a spectral young and beautiful girl who haunts the old Schloss in Königsberg, the former residence of the Markgrafs of Brandenburg and the Electors of Prussia, where the crowning of the kings of Prussia also used to take place; and whereas the identity of the 'White Lady' is shrouded in mystery, here we have a fairly reliable story to go upon. It is said that this sad-faced apparition is the ghost of a beautiful young maiden whose heart was already given to another, but who was forced into marriage with a Brandenburg Markgraf old enough to be her father, with the usual result. Love found a way for the rendezvous of the hapless couple; and information of the meetings coming to her lord's ears, he extorted from the terrified woman a confession of her guilt. Upon this the infuriated husband took a fearful revenge. This fiend in human form actually had his erring wife immured in a secret passage leading to her apartments! For through this passage her lover had been wont to pass to and retire from her boudoir; so here the wretched woman was starved to death, having been furnished with food and drink for three days by her husband, so as to prolong her fearful agonies! She might indeed have cause to haunt his family for all time! But the most remarkable part of the story yet remains to be told; for the walled-up passage is shown to the present day, and many suggestions have been made to the rulers of Prussia to have it opened to ascertain if this ghastly story be true; but all have met with an emphatic refusal, there being a record in the secret Hohenzollern archives setting forth the facts of the tragedy, and inhibiting the opening by any descendants of the House. Indeed, when the late Emperor Frederick was Crown Prince the

local antiquarian society, knowing his broad views and antiquarian tastes, asked him to obtain the permission of his royal father to open the passage and learn the truth, to which the Prince readily consented. But he was doomed to disappointment, for the then king flatly declined the permission, 'for reasons only known to myself,' adding, 'You may do so when you ascend the throne and have read the true record. And, strange to relate, when the Prince had ascended the throne the society reminded him of the circumstances, but, to their great astonishment, received a curt refusal to have the secret of the fatal passage disclosed! The present *fin de siècle* Kaiser, too, has angrily refused permission; and he, like his predecessors, has never slept at the haunted Schloss, in spite of its being, so to speak, the cradle of his race. So thus this awful tragedy still remains shrouded in mystery.

Apocryphal of the superstitions of the Hohenzollerns—superstitions, by the way, found in all ancient royal families, including our own—the rulers of that House possess a talisman brought into it by a good spirit said to guard its destinies. This is the curious 'black stone,' to which is attached the following quaint tradition:

Since the time of the Elector John Cicero, who flourished towards the end of the fifteenth century, each ruler has been wont, before his death, to hand to his successor a sealed packet. This contains a ring, in which is set a black stone said to have been dropped by a huge toad on the coverlet of a princess of the family just as she had given birth to a son. Frederick the Great found the ring in a cover, which also enclosed a memorandum, written by Frederick I., stating its value and its mode of transmission. Schneider, the librarian of William I., declares that he saw the packet handed by Geiling, the treasurer, to his royal master on his accession, and further asserts that he read his account of the talisman to the Emperor, who fully confirmed it.

The present Emperor never fails to wear on all great occasions this queer old ring, and has, like every Hohenzollern, the deepest respect for the quaint little jewel. Frederick the Great's father had the black stone mounted as a ring and bequeathed it to his son, who believed firmly in its value as a talisman, and many of the documents of that time deposited in the archives at Berlin make allusion to it.

But almost stranger and more uncanny than the 'White Lady' of woe of the House of Hohenzollern is the 'Black Lady' of evil omen to the House of Wittelsbach, the hapless insanity-tainted royal family of Bavaria. This weird spectre has been seen several times this century, walking the old family castles of Nymphenburg and Fürstenried, the former now occupied by several members of the family, and the latter by the insane King Otto.

But the 'Black Lady' differs from her 'White' sister by not being a 'maiden young and beautiful,' but of middle age, with a 'sorrowful and care-worn face.' As indicated, she wears a long black robe, trailing behind her, of medieval cut, and her hair is white. This spectre is said to have been seen even in broad daylight! This occurred three days before the sudden and inexplicable death of King Maximilian II., and is vouched for by no less personage than his own wife, the late Princess Marie of Prussia.

It was at Schloss Fürstenstein in the spring of 1864 (of course before the days of King Otto's affliction), when a small luncheon party was one day given for the late Landgraf of Hesse-Cassel and his wife. The meal was progressing merrily, when the Queen suddenly happened to look up, and, to her intense astonishment, beheld, standing behind the chair of her husband, who was seated opposite her, a lady robed in black, gazing sorrowfully at her. As quickly the vision vanished. On recovering herself she told what she had seen, knowing nothing of the dire tradition, when a dark shadow crossed the face of her doomed spouse. He instantly rose and rushed to the door, which was screened with heavy curtains and guarded without by an officer and two sentinels. But on angrily demanding who the 'lady in black' they had allowed to pass was, all three most emphatically denied that any living soul had entered. The King explained the mystery to the awe-stricken party as being a hallucination of his weak-nerved wife. But ominous stories soon floated through the castle. Three days later, in the best of health, the King started on his usual morning ride, and was suddenly taken ill. In three hours he was

dead. His death was said to be caused by gastritis.

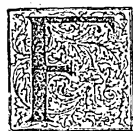
More creepy still is the story of the sentinel who died so mysteriously on the night before the fearful tragedy on the banks of the Starnberg Lake, when the insane King Louis II., while out walking, first drowned his faithful physician Dr Gudden, and then proceeded, as was afterwards shown, into deep water and drowned himself. The unhappy soldier stated that he was on duty at midnight in the King's corridor, when he suddenly beheld in the moonlight a dark figure moving along at the other end and descending the stairs leading down into the courtyard. Nothing daunted at the weird apparition, he rushed up and challenged, 'Who goes there?' But no response came, the figure descending and the soldier following. When he reached the bottom step he saw the figure in full moonlight glide across the courtyard towards the chapel, where it turned round; and, failing to get an answer, he fired at it. But the gun exploded in his hands with fatal results, and he had barely time to tell his strange adventure to the alarmed guard before he expired. The appearance of this spectre is also shrouded in deep mystery.

Such is also the case with the 'Red Lady' said to haunt the old Schloss at Darmstadt, which, according to report, was last seen on the tragic death of Princess Alice. But there is no rumour of its having been seen prior to the death of her husband. Finally, it should be mentioned that the 'White Lady' of the House of Hapsburg is positively said to have walked the corridors of the Hofburg near the Crown Prince Rudolf's apartments on the three nights preceding the awful Meyerling tragedy.

FENNAN MOSS.

By WILLIAM BUCHAN.

I.



FROM the window of the Herstane Inn, where it stood sheltered by a turn in the hill, a warm glow of firelight shone on the muddy road without. In front and stretching across the valley lay an expanse of water, glimmering dimly in the falling darkness. Midway a dark swirl marked the course of the river, and here and there a solitary tree reared itself above the flood. Overhead, a gray, desolate sky hung lowering over the line of heather-clad hills which crowded westward, black with rain; and nearer, the summits of the smaller green hills stood out yellow and sodden against the blackness beyond.

In pleasant contrast with the bleakness of the night, a genial warmth filled the kitchen of the inn. The dancing firelight lit up the black rafters overhead and played comfortably with the gather-

ing darkness. It leapt round the wide fireplace, licking up the shadows in the nooks and corners, and shining brightly on the polished fender and the tins ranged round the walls. Before the fire, as it roared and crackled up the chimney, sat two powerful, broad-shouldered men. As they sat with hands stretched out to the blaze, their wind-beaten faces shone like burnished metal, and their shadows leapt on the walls in a thousand shapes. Peaceful men were both—one the landlord of the inn; the other, Rob Fletcher, the shepherd of Hopehead, a wild glen five miles into the hills. And yet, peaceful, law-abiding men though they were, their conversation was of the late rebellion of the '45 and the movements of the nearest garrison.

'That weary rebellion!' Rob was saying. 'Mony an honest gentleman it has sent to the scaffold, and mony anither it keeps hiding for his life in wild, God-forsaken bits like the Hopehead.'

'At ony rate,' said the landlord cheerily, 'I've heard nae word o' soljers hereaway. They maun hae gien up seeking for the laird.'

'I'm nane sae sure,' returned Rob. 'He's no' near sae careful as he should be. The day afore yesterday Wat Melrose saw that ne'er-do-weel tramp body, Sandy Scott, come doon the glen; and it might be he saw the laird. That's why I'm here the nicht. But hearken'—

He ceased abruptly, and bent forward listening eagerly. Then he rose and walked quickly to the door, followed by the landlord. In the cold quiet of the windless evening rose a dull sound, low and menacing, telling of spoilt crops and broken bridges, the noise of many waters. But mingled with it came another sound which brought a look of fear into the shepherd's eyes. Low at first, but growing ever louder, nearer it came and nearer, the beat of hoofs and the jingling of trappings.

The landlord turned to Rob. 'It's them,' he said. 'What'll ye dae? Will ye warn the laird?'

The shepherd stood for a moment; then he turned and walked into the kitchen. 'If they havena a guide,' said he, 'they'll never win to Hopehead this dark nicht.'

The dragoons clattered up to the inn door, and a voice demanded with an oath to see the landlord. Peering through the window, Rob saw the landlord walk up to the leader, the lantern which he held casting shafts of yellow light into the darkness and glancing on the arms of the soldiers. As the glare fell on the leader's face the shepherd started violently and clutched the table.

'It canna be,' he muttered. The face brought him grim memories. His mind went back to his youthful days, and he saw again a lonely hillside and the body of his friend shot through the back. For a minute he gazed earnestly on the face in the lamplight. Then he turned away with a grim smile. 'It's him—at last,' he murmured.

With much noise and jingling of spurs the dragoons entered the kitchen and gathered round the fire. 'Infernal cauld, dark nicht,' said one. 'Landlord, bring us some brandy, for we have work afore us the nicht.'

No one saw, or, if they did, took any notice of, a figure in the darkest corner of the kitchen. There, reclining in a chair, wrapped apparently in the deepest and most peaceful slumber, lay the shepherd. When lights were brought he peered through his half-shut eyelids at the figures round the fire. His look rested again on the leader. He noted his various features—the enormous height, the small head with the scar across the brow, the little shifting eyes, the high-pitched voice. There could be no mistaking the man, and the shepherd's heart was filled with longings for vengeance.

The only person who took any interest in Rob as he lay there was the landlord; and he, knowing that the shepherd must have some plan in

his head, said nothing, but fetched an abundance of brandy and called on the soldiers to drink. Then for a time silence fell on the inn, broken only by the faintly-heard rumbling of the waters without and the clinking of glasses within. At last one spoke out.

'A curse on a' rebels,' said he, 'for keeping honest men out o' their beds on a nicht like this!'

'The laird?' asked the landlord tentatively.

'Ay,' answered the man, whose tongue the brandy had loosened, 'We've run the auld fox to earth at last. Sandy Scott, a tramp, gave the information. But Sandy has gane aff himsel'; and if we canna get a guide to Hopehead this dark nicht, Lord pity us.'

The shepherd had heard enough. He had formed a plan whereby he would save his master and avenge his friend; and now he cast about for a way to awake. Letting his head fall forward on his breast, he began to snore gently, then louder, increasing in vehemence, till the kitchen was filled with a stentorian snoring. The soldiers looked at him in disgust; then one stepped forward, and shaking him roughly by the shoulder, bade him cease. The snoring ceased, and the shepherd's eyes gradually opened. He rose, stretched himself, staggered forward a step, and gazed in sleepy surprise at the soldiers. At last a look of intelligence came into his eyes, and he walked up to the leader.

'I was expecting ye the nicht,' he said. 'I've been waiting for ye this three hours.'

The leader looked in amazement.

'I'm Rob Fletcher, the herd of Hopehead,' he continued. 'It was me that gave Sandy Scott the information about the laird; he wouldna tell ye that, though. Aweel, what road there is to Hopehead isna passable; it's half under water. So I can' here the nicht to lead ye a short gate across the hills. But it's time we were taking the road if ye want to be back here afore morning.'

The landlord stared at Rob in surprise and suspicion; but a look from the shepherd reassured him. The leader meanwhile joyfully grasped Rob's hand.

'We could never have managed without ye,' he said. 'We'll just drink ae glass to the King and then start; and he poured out some brandy for the shepherd.

Rob raised his glass to the light and surveyed it critically. 'I ken little and care less about either King or Pretender,' he said; 'but here's to a' gude intentions;' and drawing his sleeve across his mouth in the manner of shepherds, he tossed off the glass.

II.



AT the mouth of a rocky glen in the midst of the great hill land stood the dragoons. The lantern which the shepherd held shone on a much-bespattered party, whose clothes bore the soil of many hills. It showed, by its fitful light, a deep and narrow

glen wrapped in blackest darkness. On either hand the hills rose steep and rocky, sparsely clad with heather and bracken; and from their feet a narrow hill-path wound upwards into the darkness. The shepherd blew out the light and turned to the leader.

'The house is just round the hill,' he said. 'Bide you here and I'll gang forrit mysel'. Wat Melrose is sure to be on the watch; and if he saw onybody wi' me he would hae the laird warned, and aff in the darkness afore ye kened. I'll tell the laird that ye garred me guide ye, and I'll offer to show him the way that's clear. He'll suspect naething, and I'll easily bring him into your hands.'

Rob ceased, and waited anxiously on the leader's answer. But the man's naturally stupid brain was dulled by what he had drunk at the inn, and he had no suspicion.

'Vera weel,' he said; 'but look sharp, for it's an unco cauld job waiting here.'

The shepherd strode forward alone, and when out of earshot commenced to run. Arrived at the small, dilapidated house, he burst into the kitchen. There, before a roaring fire, with the window closely shuttered, sat the laird and Wat Melrose, quietly smoking. When Rob's panting figure entered the laird started, but, seeing only the shepherd, sat down again, and asked jocularly if he had any news of soldiers.

'Ay!' said Rob breathlessly; 'there's a party of dragoons twae hunder yards doon the glen.'

The laird sprang up in alarm, and laid a hand on his sword.

'Ye see,' explained Rob, 'I just brought them here mysel' for fear some one else would guide them. And now I'll tell ye my plans. We three men are a' about ae height. You and me will exchange claes—it'll be easier for ye, onyway, to gang about the country in herd's than in gentleman's claes—and Wat here will tak' me to the dragoons. It's ower dark for them to ken the difference; and forbye, I've ta'en away the lantern.'

'But you,' asked the laird—'what will become of you?'

'Never fash yoursel' about that,' answered Rob. 'They'll no tak' me far. I'll be at the sheep in the morning as usual.'

The laird could say nothing further. When the shepherd said a thing he meant it, and nothing could dissuade him. Besides, he could come to no great harm.

'God bless you!' he said simply. 'For my own part, I am not sorry. It is poor work hiding here like a rat in a hole. In the meantime I shall go to my cousin's house in the west, where they will never think of seeking me. From there I must take ship to France, as many a better man has had to do.'

The change of clothes was soon effected, the farewells taken, and the laird strode off up the

glen on his night tramp westwards. The other two men took the opposite direction, and as they went the shepherd unfolded to Wat his further plans and directed him how to act. When they reached the narrow outlet of the glen the dragoons suddenly rose around them. The shepherd, feigning an attempt to escape, burst away from Wat; but, tripping over a stone, he was immediately overpowered. The leader meanwhile stepped up to the supposed laird and scrutinised him carefully. The darkness prevented his features being seen; but, feeling the clothes and the sword, he had no suspicion, and, turning to Wat, began to thank him effusively.

Making his voice as like the shepherd's as possible, Wat cut him short. 'I've done my part,' he said; 'and a' you've got to do is to tak' him awa'. It's time I was in my bed.' So saying, he was moving off, when the leader called him back.

'Stop!' he said. 'Can we no' bide the nicht at the hoose?'

Here was a new development which they had not foreseen. To allow the dragoons into the house would mean their own discovery and the possible capture of the laird, an event which must be averted at all costs.

'Weel,' said Wat slowly, 'ye might, if ye have nae objections to sleeping under the open sky; for the kitchen is the only room that has a roof till it, and its no' big enough to haud ye a'. But no,' he added suddenly, as the thought struck him, 'it'll no dae. To get Wat Melrose out o' the way, I telled him the dragoons were coming up; and he went off to raise the shepherds round about. They'll be here afore morning, and as the laird is weel liked, they are sure to make a desperate attempt to rescue him. It would be safer to gang back to the inn.'

The leader stood irresolute. He was reluctant to face the long tramp again, and he knew that his men could easily scatter any shepherds. Still, there was a possibility of their rescuing the laird, and he was unwilling to afford them any such chance. 'I'll no' risk it,' he said; 'but we'll need you to guide us back again through these God-forsaken hills.'

'Hoots!' answered Wat. 'Ye surely mind the road ye cam'. If no', just tie yoursel' to the laird, and tell him ye'll shoot him if he guides ye wrang. He'll gang canny enech then;' and with that Wat turned on his heel and vanished in the darkness.

With his right arm bound to the leader's left, Rob led the way down the glen. Behind straggled the dragoons, already wearied by their upward march, cursing the night and the roughness of the road. Several times the leader tried to engage his companion in conversation; but Rob was silent, resolute not to betray himself. His mind was filled with other thoughts, with his plans for escape and vengeance. It was fixed on a lonely

glen in the heart of the hills whither by degrees he was heading, gradually veering off from the direct road to the inn. Onward they wound, a blacker blot in the darkness, over hill and down valley, in silence save for the squelching of their heels in the sodden turf. In that wilderness of rock and heather, rendered more confusing by the darkness, they were entirely at the mercy of their guide. The night seemed blacker than ever; and, to make matters worse, they had no light. A smur of rain also had come on, and, dripping coldly on their faces, added to their discomfort. Onward they marched, tripping over boulders, stumbling in the long heather, and slipping over the sodden ground. At last, when they had mounted a low hill, the shepherd's heart beat faster. He knew that in the blackness below was the scene where the last act must be played. Filling the strath in front lay the Fennan Moss. Dangerous even in dry weather, after the recent rains it would be quite impassable, save by one road. That path Rob had come to know by watching the sheep; and now, through long acquaintance, he knew its every turn, and could walk it by night as by day. Yet now even the path would hardly be safe; but Rob was determined on a bold move. He led the way at an angle down the hillside, and arriving at the bog, struck boldly along the path, increasing his pace as he went. The rest followed without suspicion, and found themselves suddenly floundering in the edge of the moss. They drew back in alarm, while the shepherd increased the distance between them. The leader, walking on comparatively firm ground, heard their footsteps cease.

'Come on!' he cried, with an oath. 'Why do you stop?'

'Watch the laird,' shouted a dragoon in answer. 'He has led us into a bog. Stop him, or he'll escape.'

The leader halted in fright and raised his pistol. But before he knew, the shepherd had stretched out his left arm and snatched it from him. In terror for his own life, the man called on his dragoons not to shoot and held back. But in a moment Rob had clapped the pistol to his breast. 'Come on,' he said, 'or, by heaven, I'll shoot you like a dog!'

As they advanced the ground became softer, and the two men sank deeply. On either side the black moss water glimmered cold and dark. The shepherd's heart was filled with a fierce joy as he dragged his companion onward. He had saved his master, and he would now avenge his friend. Onward they went, deeper into the heart of the moss, treading swiftly and lightly, and dragging their feet from the sinking ground. When the shouts of the dragoons had grown faint on the bank Rob halted. They had come to a piece of ground several yards broad, and much firmer than the rest. Rob ordered his companion to cut their

bonds; then he faced him and laid a hand on his right arm.

'The laird,' he said abruptly, 'is weel on his way to the west by this time; and I am Rob Fletcher, the herd. I wouldna have telled ye that; only naeboddy will ever hear tell o't, for ye'll never leave here alive.'

He felt the man's arm tremble under his grasp.

'Ye'll shake mair, my man, afore I'm done,' he continued. 'Ye have maybe never seen me before, but fine I mind you. Ye'll have heard o' Sandy Veitch? I thought sae. Weel, you've escaped justice long, but your day of reckoning has come at last. You killed that man in jealousy and in the coward's way—shot him in the dark. Ye left him for dead, but he was living when I fand him in the morning. From him I learned the murderer's name; and there I vowed that, whenever and wherever I met ye, I would avenge my friend. The times were troublous then, and, being a soldier, you escaped justice; but now Heaven has sent you into my hands. As you killed Sandy, so you deserve to die; but I'll give you a fair chance of life. We have baith pistols. Gang to the end of this piece of ground, and when I give the word, fire. I'll act with a' fairness.' So saying, he handed him back his pistol.

The man uttered no word; he was trembling violently and his face was ashen gray. He felt that vengeance had overtaken him, and that his doom was about to fall. He felt that to stand up before the shepherd at four yards and with a trembling hand meant certain death. For a moment he could think of nothing, stunned by the sudden discovery. Then, as he turned away, a fierce desire of life rushed over him. He was facing the side of the bog from which they had come; before him must lie the path. By that way there was a faint hope; in facing the shepherd, none. When Rob called on him to halt, he turned suddenly, fired, and darted along the path. As he vanished a look of deep chagrin passed over the shepherd's face. But he did not move. The bullet passed harmlessly over him and dropped with a flop into the moss beyond. Rob knew what was coming, and listened quietly for the end. For a few steps the flying dragoon kept the path; then at a turn he went off. There were some soft, sinking footsteps, a cry of deadly fear, drowned in a splash.

Late next day a sorely bedraggled party of dragoons rode off from the Herstane Inn. Without much surprise the landlord noticed that one of them led a riderless horse. He watched them ride down the valley in a limp and dispirited manner. As they advanced they began to scatter as men without a leader. Then a turn in the hillside hid them from sight.

In his cousin's house in the west lay the

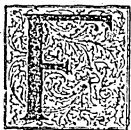
laird, safe from pursuit. To-morrow he must take ship for France, there to abide till better times fall.

Away in the heart of the hills the Fennan Moss

lay still and treacherous as before. All traces of footsteps had disappeared, and there was nothing to show that in the middle, many feet below its oozing, placid surface, lay the body of a man.

CULTIVATION OF VEGETABLE SILK IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.



FREQUENT references have recently been noticeable in various newspapers to the discovery of new fibres adapted in a greater or less degree to the purposes of industrial manufacture. From these reports the casual reader may be led to deduce that many of the fibres, of both animal and vegetable origin, in use at the present day are in danger of being ousted in the near future by some newly discovered rival. A German doctor, improving on a method patented in France some years ago, has produced from cotton a fibre which in many respects surpasses the material from which it is prepared; and the same may be said of an English process patented in 1897, by which, from a mass of cotton dissolved in certain chemicals, continuous threads may be spun and fibres obtained of any desired length. The fineness and length of the fibres produced by either of these processes are the chief features of improvement, which may possibly induce manufacturers to take them up. The former is already being handled on a large scale on both sides of the Channel; and the latter, although as yet scarcely beyond the experimental stage, bids fair to become equally successful.

We hear that even silk—the queen of all fibres—is not secure on her throne. She likewise has many competitors, and that little lepidopterous labourer, the silkworm, is likely soon to be out of work. Of these, one hails from certain Mediterranean shores, notably from Sicily, where at low tide, from myriads of shellfish which attach themselves to the rocks and larger stones upon the beach, a quantity of very fine and glossy fibrous matter not unlike a cobweb, and similar in appearance to silk, is obtained, and this, when thoroughly washed, dried, and combed, is made up into fabrics.

Another fibre which threatens to displace the produce of the silkworm is that known as Vandyara silk, produced in Glasgow by artificial means and at a very small cost. It consists of extremely fine threads obtained by forcing a gelatinous solution through a number of minute apertures; and after undergoing a special waterproofing process the fibres become pliable, and can be handled on the looms with perfect ease.

Spun glass, in fine and glossy fibres, capable of

conversion into textile fabrics possessing a sheen even surpassing that of silk, has long been known; but unfortunately it has serious disadvantages unfitting it for general use.

The only fibre which really deserves to be called a substitute for silk is ramie—known also in England as rhea and China-grass, according to the stages reached in its preparation. It is of vegetable origin, and, curiously enough, the plant is a native of China, the land to which we owe our earliest knowledge of the true product of the silkworm. There, as in many other countries of the Far East, it has been known under various names—in China, *tchou-ma*; in Japan, *karao*; in Java, *wapierit*—from time immemorial, and has been used for cordage, nets, and coarse cloth. It was apparently widely known in olden times, for to the present day it is unwrapped from mummies found in Egypt and from human remains in the burial-mounds of India.

This fibre is obtained in some regions from the *Boehmeria nivea* of botany, and in others from *Boehmeria tenacissima*. Both of these plants belong to the *Urticaceæ* or nettle family, and usually reach five or six feet in height. The fine filaments, which are extracted from the twenty to twenty-five stalks of the plant, constitute the strongest and most beautiful of all vegetable fibres, combining much of the fine glossy appearance of silk with the strength of flax. Like the latter, this fibre can be bleached to an almost dazzling whiteness, and possesses in a marked degree the peculiar power of holding dyes of the former.

Although it may be on a comparatively small scale, ramie is actually cultivated in Ceylon, the Malayan Archipelago, Brazil, Mexico, and many of the smaller states in Central and South America, besides those countries already mentioned. As an article of export, however, it may be said to have scarcely made its debut. To some extent it is now being used, both in England and on the Continent, in the manufacture of yarn, drill, velvets, fancy cloths, and hosiery; whilst in the form of carpets, household drapery, and hangings it gives promise of a great future. The untrained eye would find it difficult in the extreme to distinguish many of these articles from similar ones of silk.

Long enough ago the use of this invaluable

fibre would have been adopted generally by European and American manufacturers; but there has hitherto been an apparently insurmountable barrier, inasmuch as no suitable machinery, capable of thoroughly and economically solving the problem of preparation for the markets, has been forthcoming. This is the problem that many a level head has been endeavouring to solve for years past. Thirty years ago the Government of India, desirous of encouraging these attempts, offered large money prizes to any one inventing a machine which would extract the fibre and so handle it as to turn it out fit for the manufacturer. None of the inventions submitted, however, were considered satisfactory, owing, probably, to the prohibitive cost of the processes. The great difficulty all along has been the separation of the filaments from the woody matter enveloping them, and when separated, to rid them without injury of the strongly adherent gummy substance still left behind. This, it was claimed, could be effected by an invention put on the market some few years ago by Captain S. B. Allison, a native of Texas; but although his machine was more or less successful in its treatment of this fibre, it was generally pronounced to be too complicated. Of the other methods which have since been proposed, the Blaye-Subra and Smith-Nicolle processes deserve mention; but the process generally considered to be the best, and which appears to have eclipsed all previous attempts, is that known as the Gomess process—the invention of an English chemist of that name. This has given such good results that it has been taken up by a London syndicate, which is prepared to contract at very satisfactory prices for the purchase of large quantities of ribbons—the trade name for strips of dried bark containing the fibres.

Experiments which have been going on for years have proved that ramie may be grown successfully and profitably in Central America; and there is no reason, therefore, why tropical planters should not turn their attention to its cultivation. Nothing is more simple or more easily undertaken on a small capital. Being perennial, the plant produces crops through several years without replanting. The annual yield per acre is astounding, the cost of production low, the demand constant, and the profit good; while by shipping the article in the shape of ribbons a large outlay on machinery is avoided, and at the same time the cost of the labour involved in tedious methods of preparation.

The ramie-plant is very hardy, having an unusually wide distribution; but it thrives best in moist and shady situations in tropical regions. Almost any soil will suit it; but a deep, rich, and loose loam answers best. It can be propagated either from cuttings, seed, or from sections obtained by division of the tuberous roots of older plants. Where these latter are procurable

it is advisable to propagate from them. The process is very simple. Long furrows are dug; the ground between them is well harrowed; and the roots with most 'potato eyes' in them being selected, they are cut into pieces of a moderate size, and planted in the beds about a foot apart. Then the beds are covered with a sprinkling of soil from two to three inches in depth. The luxuriance of the plants springing from these roots naturally varies a great deal, according to locality; but under favourable conditions the quantity of stalks and their height should be as I have stated, and the first crop ready for harvest in three months from the date of planting. Planting from seed is only adopted in cases where the germ of the plant has to be carried over any great distance, occupying a long time in transit. Here, too, the *modus operandi* is very simple, although less so than that by planting from roots. The exceedingly small seeds are mixed with fine earth and sown broadcast over the beds, which are then covered with a thin layer of fine soil. Just as the first blades appear a temporary framework is erected over the beds, and covered with palm or plantain leaves, or matting, in order to protect the young shoots from the direct rays of the sun. The matting must be kept moist by day, and is removed at sunset. Constant weeding of the beds is essential, and when three or four inches high the shoots are ready to be transplanted, having been well watered the night before. The earth surrounding the roots, when taken from the nursery, should not be shaken off—the more earth that goes with them to their new position the better.

Not long ago I happened to find myself one morning at the principal Pacific port of Guatemala—San José—a mixture of wooden and *adobe* huts encircling a few larger but even less elegant edifices with galvanised iron roofs; and, aware of the fact that one or two plantations where the cultivation of ramie has been made a speciality were to be found in the vicinity, I booked for Escuintla by the narrow-gauge line which connects the port with the capital—Guatemala City.

The traveller in Central America, after a few journeys such as this—eight or nine miles an hour through choking dust—learns to be thankful for small mercies, such as, for instance, the comfort afforded by the best hotel in a town like Escuintla, which is a very small mercy indeed. The town is surrounded by numerous sugar estates and the few ramie plantations already mentioned. One of the best among the latter is that belonging to Señor Arnaud, at Monte Alto, which lies a few leagues out of the town—in a north-westerly direction, I think it is—and I decided to make my way there. Accordingly, the next day I hired a mule for a few days indefinitely, and set off.

To speak of the native *caminos*—other than those in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital and larger towns—as roads would be to utter a gross libel on the word. Highways and lanes alike are but beaten tracks through the bush, whose width depends entirely on the amount of traffic on them. Arriving at a junction of several of these, having no directions beyond that I must stick to the widest, small wonder that I erred and had to retrace my way. Starting afresh on another track—not the widest, but that on which most wheel-ruts were visible—I determined to keep to it and put up with the consequences. While the mule was ambling slowly along, apparently as undecided as its rider, I happened to look forward along the track, and noticed a figure approaching. As it drew nearer I could distinguish a very shabby native of the ‘don’t-like-work’ type astride a well-proportioned horse and a somewhat dilapidated Mexican saddle. I kept my eyes fixed on this stranger as he approached gradually; but, before I had quite finished taking stock of him, some unaccountable instinct prompted me to glance over my shoulder, after the manner of a nervous child in the dark, down the lane I had just traversed. There behind me appeared another stranger, also well mounted and sufficiently disreputable-looking, but not quite so close upon me as the first.

Now, highway robbery, although not common in Central America, is not entirely unheard of; and the discreet traveller will always provide himself with a trusty revolver before setting out on a more or less lengthy journey, for otherwise he is liable to sustain serious losses or receive nasty wounds and bruises whilst striving to avoid them.

As the stranger from the front drew nearer I was better able to study his physiognomy, and his decidedly bad face convinced me that his intentions were no better, and I persuaded myself that the stranger in the rear was his confederate.

Nearly everybody in Central America—man, woman, or child—is addicted to the habit of smoking; the article they consume being torpedo-shaped apologies for cigars known as *puros*, native made and of native-grown weed. Taking cunning advantage of the prevalence of this habit, the favourite scheme of these robbers, or *ladrones*, is to stop the traveller on lonely roads and ask him for a light, chewing an unlit *puro* the while. When the unsuspecting traveller complies—usually by offering his own lighted cigar—his arm is grabbed and he is violently thrown from his beast to the ground; and before he has time to realise what has happened, even if his neck has not been broken by the fall, he is robbed of everything of value about him, and his provisions and mount are gone. It is an old dodge, and usually a successful one. I have known many instances of its use, all of which had the desired

effect—from a robber’s point of view—especially as, according to native etiquette, the granting of a light is a favour which cannot be refused even to the very meanest beggar; and of course this fact greatly helps these wily scoundrels in their design.

As I rode along, having turned all this over in my mind, I gave my belt a pull so that my revolver was in front and somewhat handier, and then I spurred the mule onwards to meet the stranger; for, now that I knew that something was coming, I wanted it to come quickly and end the suspense.

Coming abreast of me, he closed in, and asked in an insolent and off-hand tone for a light.

‘*Permitame su fuego, hombre,*’ said he; and as he held out his left hand as if to receive my lighted cigar, I noticed that his right was dangerously near his *machete*. His half-suppressed smile and his occasional rapid glances towards the other stranger approaching from the rear convinced me that in prompt action lay my only chance.

Taking the lighted cigar from my mouth as if about to hand it over as usual, I at the same time noiselessly released my revolver. Then quickly sticking the cigar into the open barrel, I held it out towards him. ‘*Con mucho gusto,*’ was my polite reply.

The suddenness of it took the rogue entirely by surprise, and the smile he was wearing passed quite as suddenly from his face to mine. He took the cigar, however, and the hint too—the former very gingerly—lit his own *puro*, and even replaced my cigar in the revolver-barrel, which, of course, I kept ‘quite contagious.’ A timid ‘*Adios, señor,*’ and he was gone.

This trick of mine is, I believe, a very old one. A boy from Texas had initiated me into it years before I dreamt of ever crossing the seas; and now that I had profited by his instruction and proved the effectiveness of the ruse, I vowed as I rode away that the very first opportunity should find me drinking a deep draught to the health of my friend from Texas.

My confederate theory had proved true also, for the rider coming up from the rear, after exchanging a few words with the first-comer, turned about, and the baffled pair were soon out of sight. Even yet I cannot repress a smile as I recall the picture of those two retreating rogues, bearing in every line of their downcast figures the mark ‘returned empty.’

I went on my way rejoicing, but at a considerably accelerated pace, for I was not entirely without fears of their reappearance in some other and—from their point of view—more effective rôle. That was the last I saw of them, however; and, indeed, I need have had no fear, for such men are arrant cowards at heart, and will seldom attack openly or when one is *en garde*. They confine their attempts to the occasions on which they have a manifest advantage.

About dusk I came upon a small hut on the left of the track—a sort of bird-cage built of cane and thatched with palm-leaves. I dismounted and went inside. In reply to my queries, the Indian occupant informed me that I was on the right track; in fact, I was on the outskirts of the very plantation I was in search of, and he himself was in the employment of its owner. Thanking the Indian and bidding him the usual *adios*, I spurred my mule onwards, and finally reached the house about seven in the evening, having taken a whole day to accomplish a journey which should have occupied but a few hours.

The owner, I was sorry to find, was not at home, having gone up to the capital on business; but his foreman made me very comfortable, and in the morning showed me over the plantation. I was fortunate indeed, for both here and on other plantations in the neighbourhood which I visited the harvest of ramie was just commencing.

The harvest begins at from sixty to eighty days from planting. The stalks are carefully examined and watched. They begin to change colour near the roots, turning gradually from green to a reddish-brown. When the brown colour reaches to, say, half a-foot from the ground the stalks are ready to be harvested; and the less delay there is in gathering in the crops the better, for the next will grow the quicker. Care is very necessary in cutting, in order to avoid damaging the roots. The native labourers grasp the tops of the stalks in a bunch in the left hand, and by rapidly passing the right down their whole length remove all the leaves; and then with a sharp *machete* or other suitable implement the whole is, by a single and dexterously delivered blow, cut off at a couple of inches from the roots. The tender portion at the top is then lopped off, and the remainder, made into convenient bundles, is conveyed to the barn or shed where decortication is to take place.

As I went from plant to plant, watching them at work, in my mind's eye the busy crowd of semi-nude natives became for a space the Rev. Justus Krenk's Hindu converts pulling their Nilghiri nettles in order that 'the heathen shall in white clothes made by their own hands clothed be,' and one momentarily expected to hear the trump of Athlon Daz's horn, and then to see the crowd break and flee as they did in that truly 'moving' story of Kipling's.

To return to our subject: the ramie-plant, like ginger and many other crops, is very exhausting to the soil, which requires, therefore, to be occasionally fertilised. Any animal manure, mixed with ashes or lime, is found to be effective.

Decortication, the process which follows immediately after the harvest, consists in the removal of the bark, in long strips or ribbons, from the woody portion of the stems. This operation varies considerably in the different countries where ramie

is grown, and can be performed either by hand or by machinery. Whatever the means adopted, the planter's chief aim must be to avoid fermentation. The safer plan is to decorticate when green, cutting only such quantity as can be dealt with the same day; for if a large supply is cut and stacked to wait its turn at the machine, it invariably ferments and a considerable portion of the fibre is ruined. When performed by hand, the operation merely consists in soaking the bundles of stalks in vats of boiling water for about half-an-hour, after which they are allowed to cool, and the bark is carefully and quickly torn off in strips. These strips are passed through a species of mangle—between the wooden rollers of a disused sugar-mill, for instance—to rid them of as much moisture as possible; and when thoroughly dried, either in the sun, or by hanging on lines in a shed through which the air has a free passage, they may be made up into bales and shipped. There are several kinds of machines for decortivating, some of which are intended for the treatment of the stalks in a green state and others for the dried reeds; but all give a similar result and turn out the ribbons which, when thoroughly dried, are ready for the market. Where native labour is abundant, however, it would seem folly to invest in expensive machinery when the process can be performed effectively and cheaply by hand.

Estimates of the profits derived from ramie culture which have been put forth by several authorities—to wit, Sir Henry Dering, British Minister in Mexico; the Rhea Fibre Treatment Company, of London; Mr S. H. Slaughter, of Washington, U.S.A.; the Perseverance Fibre Company, of New Orleans—naturally vary considerably, for in no two countries is the cost of production the same; and whilst in some situations two crops may be harvested annually, others more fertile will allow of four, or even five. Of these authorities the first-mentioned states that 'the profits amount to one hundred and forty-five per cent. on the working capital,' which suggests that the planter of ramie on a more or less extensive scale would in a very few years find it necessary to call even six ciphers into use, and on the right side too, when striking his final balance. Personally, I lean rather towards the estimate of the second authority I have quoted. This company, having had occasion and opportunity to go into the matter very thoroughly, considers that 'four pounds per ton may fairly be taken as an average cost,' and is prepared to pay seven pounds per ton for the ribbons at port of shipment. This would represent a clear profit of seventy-five per cent. on the working capital—about half the previous estimate; and we see that from this business, embarkation in which entails very little cost beyond that of the land itself, the planter may reap profits sufficient to compensate him for his few years of isolation.

KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS PAST AND PRESENT.



WHO has not heard of that famous body the Knights of St John? It is known, even if only vaguely by some, throughout the civilised world. But what is not generally known, especially in Scotland, is that at the present day there exists an order which may be said to emulate that part of the work which was holy, noble, and useful of the old Knights Hospitallers in their best days. The order referred to is that of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. Before speaking of its work, it may be well to turn briefly to the history of the first-mentioned order, so that the relation between the two may be better understood.

So far back as the year 1048 a hospital—or rather two buildings, one for each sex—was instituted in Jerusalem for the relief of pilgrims. These buildings had each its own chapel, that attached to the portion for women being dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, while the one pertaining to the portion set apart for men was put under the patronage of St John the Almoner, a certain Cypriot, surnamed the Charitable, who had been patriarch of Alexandria. This hospital, together with a Benedictine monastery belonging to it, was founded by some pious Italian merchants of Amalfi, and had survived all the tempests of the Turkish invasion of Palestine; and to it was added later a magnificent church dedicated to St John the Baptist, who seems to have been gradually associated with St John of Jerusalem as patron of the order. The monks attached to the monastery made it their business to serve the sick and poor pilgrims, and the hospital thus became in those dangerous times a most valuable institution for the Christians who visited Jerusalem. On the approach of the Crusaders the monks were imprisoned; but they were released by the conquerors, to whose sick they rendered good service, the result being that Godfrey de Bouillon rewarded them with endowments and immunities. The hospital became rich and famous, and monastic institutions bearing their name were founded in various cities of Europe.

On the death of their abbot—Gerrard, a Frenchman—in 1118, Raymond du Pay, a Crusader and a former beneficiary of the hospital, was chosen his successor. He conceived the idea of making the monks combine military duties with their hospital work, and the Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem was accordingly founded, the declared object of the institution being to make war upon the infidels, and to afford relief and comfort to the pilgrims to the Holy City. The members assumed as their dress a long black, coarse robe, on the breast of which was a white cross. So long as the brotherhood

remained poor the work they carried out was highly beneficial; but wealth began to flow in upon them, and so impair their efficiency. Many great people, impressed with their virtue, bestowed on them rich lordships and immense treasure; and in the space of a few years the Hospital of St John was in possession of numerous manors both in the East and in Europe, which were placed under the management of members of their society, and in the fourteenth century the European countries in which the knights carried on their work were divided into branches or languages, England being one by itself.

With its rapidly increasing power, it would be too much to expect that humility would long continue to characterise the order; the end being that, after a possession of eighty-seven years, the banner of the Crescent once more waved over the hard-won city of Jerusalem. In 1191 the knights laid siege to and took the city of Ptolemais, which afforded them a last residence in the sacred territory, until, nearly after two hundred years' occupancy, the whole of that region was wrested from Christian dominion in 1292. Thereafter the knights lived in Cyprus, Rhodes, Candia, Buia, Civita Vecchia, and Viterbo respectively. At last they were fain to accept from the Emperor Charles V. Malta, with its dependent island of Gozo, and the town of Tripoli on the Barbary coast. Malta was reached on the 26th of August 1530, and the Grand Master, L'Isle Adam, was received with regal honours. The knights gave into his hands, in his capacity as their chief, all monarchical power; after which he took formal possession of the sovereignty of the island. Here the knights, who when at Rhodes became known as Knights of Rhodes, again changed their designation to that of Knights of Malta. Their chequered career in their island home ended in 1798, when Napoleon landed without opposition, and the ancient order ceased to be a sovereign power.

But to revert to its relation to the priory of St John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell, London. It is now almost impossible to fix the exact date in which this priory was founded, yet many circumstances point to the belief that it was about the year 1100, and that it emanated from the pious zeal and munificent liberality of a certain Jordan Brisset, who had received a grant of forest-land, in which is now Clerkenwell, from William Rufus, as a reward for services rendered to his father, William of Normandy. Very soon after its establishment it became one of the largest and most important priories in the Metropolis or its environs, being palatial in appearance and arrangement. In the twelfth century the district of Clerkenwell rose gently from the banks of the Thames, watered by innumerable springs of the

purest water, with the pellucid river Fleet (then called the 'River of Wells') gracefully meandering along the western side of the priory precincts, and a background of rich umbrageous foliage bearing away to the north, stretching over hill and dale to the beautiful uplands of Highgate and Hampstead, then a part of the great forest of Middlesex, and to the deer park at St Mary Bourne, now Regent's Park.

In 1185 the priory church was consecrated by Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, who happened to be then in England on an embassy to solicit assistance in furtherance of the Crusade. He was accompanied by Roger de Moulines, the seventh Grand Prior of the Hospitallers. From the year of dedication a steady augmentation of wealth and power seems to have attended the establishment in Clerkenwell; and, through the bounty of princes and private individuals, the English branch or language rose to so high an estate and such great riches (to use the words of Camden) that 'after a sort they wallowed in wealth.' Although at this time the order possessed in Christendom alone nineteen thousand manors or lordships, the purposes of the foundation were not entirely lost sight of, for in the year 1237 three hundred knights, preceded by Theodoric, their prior, at the head of a large body of armed stipendiaries, left their house in Clerkenwell for the Holy Land, the banner of St John proudly unfurled in their van.

The downfall of the Templars but increased the wealth and pride of the Hospitallers, who in 1324 succeeded to most part of the lands of the former. But evil days were also in store for the latter. In 1381 Wat Tyler's insurrection broke forth, the mob attacking and burning the priory, and afterwards beheading the Lord Prior, Sir Robert Hales, on Tower Hill. The rebuilding of the priory was completed in 1504, when the Gate House was erected by the then prior, Sir Thomas Docwra. Henry VIII. had fixed his eye upon the wealth of the order, and in 1540 the monastery was suppressed. From the foundation till its dissolution it had been presided over, according to Newcourt, by thirty-seven priors. After the death of Henry the priory church fell into the hands of the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, who destroyed great portions of the buildings for the purpose of erecting a palace for himself, which he called Somerset House. Small thanks are due to this Duke for the gate still standing; the probability is that it was retained for its utility, forming, as it doubtless did at that time, a barrier to the inner precincts. When Mary ascended the throne the priory was rechartered, and a grant made of the 'House,' the 'Gate House,' the 'Church,' and other specified places; but on the accession of Queen Elizabeth the order was once more suppressed. In 1604 James I. of England granted to Sir Roger Wilbraham, for his life, the Grand South Gate of the priory. The choir

passed by deed into the hands of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, son of the Earl of Exeter. In the reign of Charles I. it became the property of Robert Bruce, Earl of Elgin, upon his marriage with the Lady Diana, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Exeter. Lord Elgin's son was created Earl of Aylesbury, and the building was then converted into a private chapel for the Earl's use, and for many years afterwards was called Aylesbury Chapel. The estates, after remaining in the hands of this distinguished family for over a hundred years, were purchased in 1721 by Simon Michell, who in 1723 repaired and enlarged the chapel, built the present west front, and re-roofed the whole. He then disposed of the church and vaults, &c., for two thousand nine hundred and fifty pounds to the 'Commissioners for Building Fifty New Churches.' The building, after enrolment in Chancery and consecration by Edmund Gibson, Lord Bishop of London, was declared to be a parish church for ever, and formally styled 'The Church of St John, Clerkenwell, in the county of Middlesex.'

Early in the last century Edward Cave occupied St John's Gate as a residence and printing-office. It thus became the rendezvous of the literati of the period; and it is curious to note that from the spot where knights had sallied forth for crusading purposes was issued, in January 1731, *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Johnson, Goldsmith, and Savage were among the notables who visited Cave at the Gate, and Garrick's first attempt at acting in London took place within its hall. In January 1845 the then owner was, under the new Metropolitan Buildings Act, ordered to repair St John's Gate, owing to its ruinous and dangerous condition; and at this period, through the instrumentality of Mr W. P. Griffiths, F.S.A., a threatened covering of the building with composition was prevented, and a sum of money publicly collected towards making a proper restoration. This restoration took place in 1847. A few years later the Gate once more became the property and headquarters of a new body of Knights Hospitallers; but before explaining how this came to pass it must be shown how the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England was revived.

In 1814 the surviving Knights of the French Language assembled at Paris and elected a Capitular Commission for the government of the order as it then existed. This act was confirmed by Pope Pius VII., and recognised by the Lieutenant-Master, the Sacred Council, the Kings of France and Spain, and by the Knights of Spain and Portugal. Thus five-sixths of the divisions of the order were represented and acted unanimously. About the year 1827 five of the seven then existing divisions or languages of the order, through the Capitular Commission already mentioned, decreed its revival in England, with such alterations in its constitution as were neces-

sitated by the times and conformity with the reformed religion. Two Knights of the French Language of the order came as delegates, and they invested with the functions and authority of Grand Prior of England the Rev. Sir Robert Peat, who attended at the Court of Queen's Bench and took the oaths as Lord Prior in Great Britain. Thus was the suppressed English Language reconstituted; and since 1830 its members, united together as a fraternity for the purpose of performing Hospitaller and other charitable work, have been to the extent of their ability striving to carry out their duty as Hospitallers in the relief of sickness, distress, and suffering. A regular succession of Grand Priors has been continued to the present day. In 1872 the historic Gate at Clerkenwell was purchased by a member of the order, the late Sir E. Lechmere, who disposed of it to the order. Long may the latter continue in possession of such historic, and now well-cared-for, headquarters! On the 14th of May 1888, in recognition of the excellent work performed by the members of the order or fraternity during the past half-century—especially the establishment of the St John's Ambulance Association and the foundation and support of the British Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem—Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen granted them a new royal charter of incorporation under the name and style of 'The Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England,' and was graciously pleased to become the sovereign head and patron of the order. The members existing on the roll of the fraternity at the date of the incorporation formed the body corporate of the then incorporated order or fraternity, and on the eve of St John the Baptist, 24th June of the same year, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales succeeded the Duke of Manchester as Grand Prior.

In addition to the two foundations already mentioned, the following movements have been supported or set on foot by the chapter during the present century: The relief, through its almoner's department, of poor convalescents recommended by hospitals and infirmaries, by the distribution of good and nourishing food; the promotion of cottage hospitals in country districts; a system of transport for the injured by means of the ambulance stations, where suitable litters were deposited; the initiation of what has been known as 'The National Society for Aid to Sick and Wounded in War,' for the relief of both combatants during the Franco-German campaign; 'The Eastern War Sick and Wounded Relief Fund,' for the same purpose during the Russo-Servian war; the award of medals and diplomas for deeds of gallantry in saving life on land. The order has also taken part in promotion of other useful institutions, such as the Metropolitan and National Society for Training

and Supplying Nurses for the Sick Poor, and the Victoria Hospital, Cairo; and it has afforded relief to the sick and wounded of our armies in some of their recent campaigns.

The great humanitarian work being done by the St John Ambulance Association needs no mention here. It is known and deservedly appreciated all the world over. As regards the other chief foundation of the order, the British Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem, although it does a noble work, it is one not nearly so public as, and therefore far less known than, the other foundation just referred to. This latter fact is much to be lamented, because, being *absolutely* a charity, its upkeep and powers of doing good rely mainly upon voluntary contributions. Established at Jerusalem in 1882 by the order, it is designed as a representative institution of the order on the scene of its early foundation, to meet the special want which existed until the establishment of the hospital for the treatment of the most prevalent diseases of the country—those of the eye, ear, and throat. It admits gratuitously to its benefits, on equal terms, Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans. The work being done in relieving the scourges of the terrible and most common disease of Palestine—ophthalmia—cannot be too highly eulogised; but did funds permit relief could be afforded to nearly five times last year's number (over twenty-one thousand) of cases treated. Scotland in the past was closely connected with the work of the English Language of the old Order of St John, and the remains of the once important and ancient Scottish headquarters still exist at Torphichen in Linlithgowshire. One of the mottoes of the order is, *Pro utilitate hominum*—'Service in the cause of humanity;' and right worthily is this service carried out by the nineteenth-century Hospitallers.

A SONG IN WINTER.

BLACKBIRD, whistling cheerily,
Whistling from a leafless tree,
Through the mist your notes are ringing
Though no other bird is singing,
And the wind wails drearily.

Heedless of December gloom,
Though the flowers no longer bloom,
Though for ever gone the glory
Of the Year that, gaunt and hoary,
Totters to his snowy tomb,

Still your message, full of glee,
Echoes from your leafless tree:
'Summer's coming—Summer's coming—
With song of lark and wild bee's humming,
With blossoms bright for you and me!

'So,' you sing, 'the Poet's lay
Should, like mine, be blithe and gay;
Ever breathing balm for sorrows,
Still foretelling happy morrows,
Spite of cloudy skies to-day.'

LOUISA ADDEY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

WITH THE INDIAN BAYARD.

By Captain I. S. A. HERFORD, Author of *Stirring Times under Canvas*.

WOULD you like to know how many men we have in front of us? A scout has just come in, and his report tallies with other information which I have. There are ninety thousand of them.' So said genial Sir James Outram to me at his table.

I wish I could put before the reader a sketch of our commander—a finished warrior who, uniting the qualities of audacity and caution with courtesy and affectionate care of his soldiers, reminded one of the last and most famous of the old knights—the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*. When some one had dubbed Sir James the 'Indian Bayard' everybody recognised the fitness of the appellation, which ever after remained with him.

The chivalry of Outram was eminently shown when he gave up his right to command, as senior officer, to General Havelock on the march up to Lucknow for the relief of the garrison there—serving as a volunteer with the force, and only resuming his rightful position when the object had been attained.

A little incident will show something of the man. When at Alum Bagh I was riding in quest of the provost-marshal. 'His tent is to be found there, among the General's staff,' pointed out some one. I rode that way, and met a broad-shouldered, thick-set man clothed in white, with a large white cap-cover over his forage-cap instead of the usual wicker helmet enveloped by a turban.

'Can you tell me where the provost-marshal is, please?'

'Certainly.' Come along with me.' As we went, my guide walking by my horse, we chatted about various things, he casually asking about my regiment and to what part of it I belonged—for I was a stranger to him.

Presently we came upon a young fellow among the tents. 'Show this officer where the provost-marshal is.'

'Yes, sir.'

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I thanked my stout friend, and went on. 'Who is that officer?'

'That is Sir James Outram!'

I should mention that we were encamped at Alum Bagh ('Garden of the World'), once the summer palace of the Queen of Oude, nearly two miles from Lucknow, on the direct road to Cawnpore, some forty miles off. The headquarters of my regiment, the 90th, which had gone to the East for the China war, had been diverted to India by Lord Elgin on the breaking out of the Mutiny. It formed part of a force of three thousand men with which Havelock and Outram had crossed the Ganges into Oude, and forcing their way into Lucknow, had relieved the garrison. This body, thus strengthened, was able to hold its own until Sir Colin Campbell came up with his army and brought it out, together with the people of our country who had taken refuge there. The part of the regiment in which I served, three hundred strong, had sailed in H.M.S. *Transit*; and, delayed for ten days by being wrecked on a coral-reef near Sumatra, had been sent on to India as soon as possible, arriving at Cawnpore in time to form part of the first expedition after Havelock's Relief, in order to throw provisions into Alum Bagh. Here Havelock had left all his impedimenta before entering the city. We, like our headquarters, had left all our baggage at Cawnpore, for we expected to return within a week, and had instead to stay at Alum Bagh three months, being invested by the enemy till released by Sir Colin, when we took part in the Relief I have mentioned.

After the women and children and sick and wounded had been withdrawn from the Residency, there had been some divergence of opinion whether the city should be evacuated, as Sir Colin proposed, or the Kaiser-Bagh be captured and held with a small force, as Sir James desired. It was like the Indian Bayard to suggest such a difficult and dangerous service, for no doubt he himself would have commanded the troops left behind; but,

Nov. 11, 1899.

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considering the small garrison which could have been spared, while fifty thousand men at the least were arrayed against us, the enemy probably would have, as they certainly ought to have done, overwhelmed it. There can be no doubt that Sir Colin's plan, which was carried out, was the wise one—not locking up any of the small force at his disposal, but utilising it by placing it on the Cawnpore side of the city, so as to bar pursuit, and enabling him to take his important charge, which the enemy declared should not escape them, to a place of safety.

In this way, too, communication between Lucknow and Cawnpore was kept open until such time as the Chief could return with an army strong enough to capture and hold what, next to Delhi, was the most important stronghold in India. Sir James Outram, therefore, with four thousand men, the greater part of whom had been with him in the Residency, now moved to the plain outside the Alum Bagh, and encamped. The spade and the axe being put into requisition, *jhil* (swamp), *tope* (wood), and enclosures, the chief of which was the queen's summer-house—with its wall running round it—were taken advantage of, to make the position as strong as human ingenuity could suggest, while the guns and mortars with us were placed so as to be most effective.

With no fear of an enemy in his rear, Sir Colin set off on his march down-country, heavily encumbered. He had not long started when he was met by the most serious intelligence that the Gwaliors, with a second-class siege-train, had attacked Cawnpore, and had driven General Windham, who was in command, into his entrenchments. The old warrior hurried on by forced marches, and appeared at the river's bank before the enemy could get at the bridge of boats and cut off our communications with the city. He was thus able to pass over and send on to Allahabad all those he had come to rescue, and rid himself of all that impeded his movements.

We with Sir James Outram could hear, on placing the ear to the ground, the continued rumbling of guns being fired, and were kept some time in suspense as to the result—especially as it was impossible for those of us who had been at the storming of the Redan, of which the press had made him the hero, to feel any confidence in the ability of the commander at Cawnpore.

Except for going on convoy-duty, fetching provisions and stores from Cawnpore (a troublesome and anxious business), or an occasional attack on the camp, life at the Alum Bagh was not very eventful. On convoy, although the enemy hovered around, they never ventured to come to close quarters. We were let off more easily than Outram and Havelock's force was when coming along the same road. As with us, it had a long string of carts and animals going at a snail's pace. Oh, that pace! A European snail, I think, would go faster. Poor Nunn of ours was in the rearguard.

But we will draw on the narrative of a brother-officer who was present, and give an incident or two which will help to realise those times:

'It was the 23d of September when we arrived near the Alum Bagh, having crossed the Ganges on the 19th, where we found the enemy drawn up in force to bar our way, with a large body of cavalry and artillery on our left. They could not be more than five or six hundred yards off. I could plainly distinguish the trappings and chains on the horses of the cavalry, with their officers going backwards and forwards dressing the line of squadrons.

'While I was looking at them the enemy began the ball with a shell which burst high in the air with most disastrous consequences to us, as it mortally wounded Perrin, Preston, and Graham of ours, although they were standing some yards apart from each other, as well as killing and wounding many other officers and men around. The 78th and 90th, forming line to the left, advanced towards the enemy, which, wheeling its squadrons outwards, revealed a battery of guns, from which a furious fire was opened. The two regiments then broke out into a double, and cheered at the charge, whereupon, as the men said at the time, the enemy began to "ook it"—Olpherts using his guns with great effect. Most unfortunately we were not able to follow up our successes; for not only were we hampered by the train of stores, but the rain had soaked everything, and darkness had come on. Had we been able to proceed we might have gained the city without much trouble; for, as we learned afterwards, nearly all the rebels took a sudden panic and left the city; to which, seeing they were not disturbed, they soon returned. They had received the same intelligence which greeted us that evening. It was just before dark when a native ran into our column much exhausted. He carried with him from Delhi a letter written in Greek characters telling us of the fall of that city on the 14th. What distance did this man cover in the nine days, added to the distance as the crow flies? He said he had to hide and make detours, so it was a wonderful feat. I heard he got four thousand rupees (£400), and he deserved it all. Well, the column bivouacked for the night, while the train of *hackeries* (carts) on the trunk road was left there with a rearguard of the 90th, commanded by Nunn.

'The 24th came; we proceeded to draw in our pickets and pass our stores as they came up into the Alum Bagh building. We fell back for the best part of a mile, then formed up into columns preparatory to the advance, the brightly shining sun enabling us to dry ourselves and our arms. We had not been long in this position before we noticed Olpherts with his battery galloping at a racing pace in the direction of the Grand Trunk Road, but some three-quarters of a mile to our right. We soon all knew what took place.

'The line of carts was moving up when Nunn

observed some horsemen coming on. He was closing up his wagons, when some of the people with him recognised the uniforms of the 12th Irregular Cavalry. "These are friends," said they. They were not wilfully deceiving him; they did not realise that, while half of the 12th Irregulars had remained staunch and did good service to us, the other half had mutinied and gone off with their arms and their horses. It was these, who, under cover of the same uniform, calculating on being taken for their loyal *confrères*, undertook to throw us into some confusion; and they succeeded. Nunn thought it was all right, and took no more special interest in the matter. On came the horsemen, the commander leading in a deliberate fashion, shouting out something amicably and dropping his tulwar. His party had by this time come up so as to envelop Nunn and his knot of men. Then they set to work, slashing right and left, killing some nine or ten. Meanwhile the leader had cut down Nunn, who had raised his revolver, but it missed fire. I saw his body afterwards—one cut went down from the top of his head to the mouth, and one had cut through his collar-bone to the centre of his body. The rest of our men then rallied and took the cover which the carts afforded, and shot down some of the enemy. Olpherts had now come down, and as the horsemen were drawing off he sent some rounds of case-shot among them, emptying a good many saddles.

Although we had at Alum Bagh an enormous number of men arrayed against us—for, Delhi having been captured, the enemy were free to turn their attention to the retention of Lucknow as their only chance, and swarmed into Oude—we had one advantage in that our opponents' leaders were always at loggerheads. If all wanted the post of honour, they did not care for the post of danger. News came in to us one day that we were to be attacked by twelve regiments; but they split upon the question which regiment should bring up the rear. One day, I remember well, there was an alarm. Our foes were coming *en masse*. They advanced nearer and nearer; this time they meant business. In the centre of our line there were always some horse-artillery guns ready harnessed. Out of a tent near came a wiry, bronze-featured man clad in a flannel shirt with sleeves rolled up, canvas overalls kept up by a shabby cummerbund, and solar tope; a sword and pistols completed his get-up. There was no pretension to dandyism about him; none was needed, for was this not Jack Olpherts, V.C. (his real name was William), the adored of the soldiers, with whom, for his audacity and nerve, he went by the sobriquet of 'Hell-fire Jack'? Swinging himself into the saddle, and without waiting for a cavalry escort, as by all the rules of war he ought to have done, he dashed towards the enemy. When close to them, quick as thought he turned his guns round and saluted them with a round of

grape. The enemy naturally felt hurt and indignant at such audacity. They hesitated a moment to think out the best way of punishing such bravado. If they did not know how to make use of that moment Olpherts did. He had reloaded, and there came upon the dusky crew another shower of his bon-bons. They must be moving—a third shower might come upon them. They moved—not to the front, however, but to the rear. They had broken and fled. In a few minutes Olpherts was back at his tent as calm as if nothing had happened. The ground on which the enemy had halted a moment, preparatory to chastising the *Feringhee*, was strewn with hundreds of shoes, which the owners had kicked off the better to run away.

One characteristic of Olpherts was his quickness at grasping a situation and his readiness in action. Being certain of himself, he felt he could afford to give points to the other side.

One day there was to be a grand attack; the Queen-mother of Oude and a number of distinguished visitors were to be present. One swell had dressed up as Houniman, the monkey-god; larger groups than usual of red coats were to be seen, while other natives appeared in garments which seemed newly washed for the occasion. On our right was a small mosque, and just beyond it a long trench. The enemy came on in large numbers across the open, and, making ready to rush the camp, dropped into the friendly trench, being masked also by the mosque. They snapped their fingers at the few rifles which we could bring to bear against them. Our officer in command had been quietly watching the manœuvre; he waited till he could have a good haul, and then he ordered one of the guns at the corner of the palace wall to be trained on the trench: this it completely enfiladed. Its grape came as a perfect surprise. Being stationary and never now being fired, our assailants must have forgotten its presence. They arose out of that trench like so many white birds, and scattered. They came no more that day towards our camp, but fled to their own lines.

We were enlivened during our stay at Alum Bagh by one episode at all events. This was the holding of some sports within our lines while the enemy was watching us from theirs, not a mile off. In the olden time when the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* was alive, and combatants prided themselves on dealing chivalrously with each other, it continually happened that on such an occasion a truce was proclaimed, and both sides joined in, so as to carry out the amusement—separating again when the proceedings had come to an end without any thought of treachery towards each other. Naturally things were different with us now, and we knew that our enemy would assail us should he see an opportunity. Olpherts' battery, therefore, was on the ground, with horses harnessed ready for any

eventuality; while our cavalry, for which our military-train did service (many Crimean light-cavalry men and some drafted 11th Hussars being in them), were kept near their horses also. Now might be seen the late H. M'Pherson, of the 78th Highlanders, win a hurdle-race; he died as a general officer in Burma. Chester Master of the 5th Fusiliers signalled himself also; he is still alive.

One night, soon after a conversation with Sir James Outram at his table, I was suddenly awoke. 'Herford, Herford, rouse up! The regiment is on parade!' Two minutes sufficed for slipping on my clothes; not before, however, I had shaken out my boots to see if anything had lodged inside—scorpions and snakes were not wanted there.

I found my company; strict silence was enjoined, and not a pipe alight was allowed. It was clearly an important affair, and to be hidden from the enemy. The officers seemed to know nothing. 'What's up, Bill? Have we got to retire on Cawnpore after all?' 'Surely we are not going to attack,' whispered one soldier to another. 'Well, whatever it is, Old Cap-cover is in command; it's all right.' And so they all agreed 'Old Cap-cover' could not go wrong! 'We shall soon see.' We marched along the front

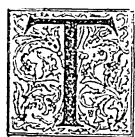
towards the headquarters. If we turned to the right again that was the way to Cawnpore, and we should leave the camp all standing behind us. If to the left—why, that was straight towards the enemy.

We slanted towards the left, and formed into line. On, on, with a ringing cheer, we swept into the enemy's works, using the bayonet only. We had taken four guns and a quantity of arms, and—what was more important in the estimation of Tommy Atkins—a supply of vegetables, chiefly onions, that the soldiers grubbed up from the ground and crammed into their haversacks. A pile of letters which had been intercepted by the enemy was discovered in a hut, one of our fellows finding one addressed to himself. We then quietly set about returning. The enemy now sent a column in our direction. If they had thought of cutting us off they very soon changed their minds, and we regained our lines.

Sir James had found through his spies that an expedition with four guns had been got ready to attack the next convoy, and he determined to be beforehand with them. I will venture to say that very few commanders besides Sir James Outram could have got such a handful of men to advance to what looked like certain death.

COUNT PAUL.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.



HERE can be no doubt that this question caused Cumberlege a moment of acute embarrassment; for, so far from possessing even the remotest knowledge of the purport of M. Lavtchok's message, he had never so much as heard of the gentleman himself till that moment. He knew that the eyes of the whole assembly were upon him, and that the least indecision or nervousness of manner would betray his real identity. This consciousness lent him nerve, and by a sudden inspiration he answered, speaking in a low tone, 'The message is for your ears alone, M. Karamoff. You shall learn it—later!' and prepared to move to the head of the table, where a raised chair had apparently been left vacant for the Count. Karamoff smiled again, and motioning Cumberlege to the vacant chair, took his own seat beside him. Cumberlege's mind was busy with conjectures as he sat down; he was aware that safety could only lie in a policy of silence and observation. For the rest, chance must be responsible. He had just seated himself when a gentleman, who appeared to be the chairman, rose from the extreme end of the table round which the company was grouped, and bowing to the Count (for such was the capacity in which Cumberlege was now received by all present), addressed himself to the party in

a distinct and measured tone. By the most fortunate chance Cumberlege happened to be a complete master of the French language, which he understood with the ease and spoke with the fluency of a native; for he had spent much of his life in Paris, where for some time he had been attached to the British Embassy. It was in French that the proceedings at which he found himself present were conducted. Cumberlege, eager to discover some clue to the mystery which surrounded him, bent forward to catch the speaker's words; and once again chance favoured him, for almost the first dozen sentences of the speech gave him a clear inkling of the character of the meeting, the aims of those assembled, and their present purpose. He determined to shape his conduct by events.

'Monsieur le Comte and fellow-members,' began the speaker, glancing round, 'the object that brings us together to-night, and which has obliged us to summon to our council-table the Head of our Order with a haste and informality for which we trust he will pardon us, is one that involves serious issues—as we are all aware. The Secret Committee of the Inner Council has for its aims a far-reaching and progressive policy, the establishment of principles that will, in the end, revolutionise the distribution of European interests. But for the furtherance of our ends, the first

essential is absolute secrecy—implicit obedience to the oaths of the society. To any member who may prove disloyal to the oaths of the Order, it has been ordained by the Secret Council that one punishment alone shall be meted out—the only punishment that can safeguard the interests of the council and the resultant welfare of the kingdom of Borastria. Only so recently as yesterday it came to our knowledge here in London that a member of the council—a trusted and tried member—had proved false to her oaths, a traitress to her country, and had betrayed to the enemy a secret which had been entrusted to her care—a secret of considerable importance. It remained only for us to despatch to Paris a telegram to Count Paul Rassovitch, begging his immediate attendance at our meeting to-night, in order that we might secure his authority for the carrying out of the usual sentence upon the offender. I think none, or at least but few of us, have previously had the pleasure of personally meeting the Head of the Order, and I hope I may take this present opportunity of assuring Count Paul that each of us assembled here to-night is conscious of the honour he confers upon us by his presence.’

The speaker paused, and Cumberlege bowed slightly, in acknowledgment of the compliment paid him.

‘Now,’ resumed the chairman, ‘with the permission of the Count, we will summon to the council table the culprit whom we are here assembled to judge.’

He turned to one of the ladies present, and addressed a few words to her in a low tone. The lady instantly rose and left the room. During her absence Karamoff whispered hurriedly to Cumberlege:

‘The authority for the sentence, Count, rests with you. There is only one penalty. She must die—of course?’

‘She must die—of course,’ repeated Cumberlege mechanically.

‘She is young and lovely,’ urged Karamoff, speaking low. ‘Supposing you’—

He was interrupted in his sentence by the opening of the door. Cumberlege looked up. Three persons entered: the lady who had recently left the room, another and elder woman, and between them a third—young, fair, and passing beautiful. It was upon her that Cumberlege’s glance was riveted from the first moment that she crossed the threshold of the chamber. Never in his life, vowed Cumberlege, had he gazed upon a creature so divine, so entrancing, so singularly and enthrallingly lovely.

‘This a traitress!’ he muttered to himself. ‘No, by heaven! so sweet a bosom could never harbour a treacherous thought; so fair a brow could never conceal aught but a truthful mind!’ And still his eye followed her as, with slow graceful steps and bowed head, she glided to her place, and, guarded on either side by her two attendants,

stood waiting, a mute picture of beauteous despair, upon the dictum of her judges.

‘Mademoiselle Naritzka,’ said the chairman, bending upon her a stern, cold glance, ‘the Count is present.’

With a little start the young lady looked up; her eyes met Cumberlege’s, and for a moment dilated with a sudden wonder, while a deep blush suffused her pale cheeks and then died out, leaving them once more lilies instead of roses. She inclined her head slightly and let her glance fall.

‘Mademoiselle Naritzka,’ continued the speaker, ‘you are aware of the purpose for which we have summoned the Count here to-night. The Order to which you belong is one that admits neither of mercy nor extenuation in the case of those who break their oaths of fealty to it—only justice. You have broken your oaths. You have betrayed the council. You stand, convicted, a traitress!’

‘Ah, no!’

The cry burst involuntarily from the lips of the trembling girl as these harsh concluding words were levelled at her. Cumberlege moved uneasily. The sight of beauty in distress wrought upon his manhood. But the time for interference was not yet. He controlled himself, therefore, with some difficulty as the chairman proceeded:

‘You deny it, mademoiselle? Listen. To whom was the cipher plan of the secret scheme of the council entrusted for delivery to the king?’

‘To me,’ came the response in a low, melodious voice, whose silvery tones struck a chord of infinite pity in the heart of Cumberlege.

‘Ah! To you. So. To whom was it delivered, mademoiselle?’

Silence.

‘Was it delivered to the king?’

‘Alas! no, monsieur.’

‘Alas! indeed,’ mocked the chairman. ‘Come now: was it not delivered into the hands of Zourakoff, the Russian agent?’

There was a slight pause. Mdle. Naritzka locked her hands together, and her lips trembled. Cumberlege felt his heart stand still. Apart from his apprehension for the safety of this beautiful creature, he was conscious of a strange exhilarating sense of excitement in the position in which he found himself; for the time being he almost persuaded himself that he was in reality identified with the secret machinery of these mysterious Balkan intrigues, and the dangerous allurements of political conspiracy filled his soul.

‘Come, mademoiselle, answer!’ went on the voice of the chairman. ‘Were the contents of the document made known to Zourakoff?’

Mdle. Naritzka bowed her head. ‘It is useless to deny it,’ she replied.

‘Ha! You admit the charge. And by whom

were the contents communicated to Zourakoff, mademoiselle? Pray inform us. By whom?' he sneered.

Mdlle. Naritzka did not answer.

'Nay then, mademoiselle, it could have only been by one person—a person in whom the council had placed the highest trust and confidence. Do you deny it?'

Again there was silence.

'I think,' pursued the chairman, looking round at the company, 'that we do not require any further evidence of Mademoiselle Naritzka's guilt. For such an offence the laws of the Inner Council prescribe but one penalty. The culprit who betrays the secrets of the council must die. The sentence of death has only to be ratified by the Head of the Order.'

He paused and glanced at Cumberlege.

'State the charge!' exclaimed Cumberlege, whose chief concern was to gain a moment of time in which to form some plan of action.

'Why, Monsieur le Comte, the charge is that Mademoiselle Naritzka, entrusted with a secret communication to Borastria, has betrayed us to her lover'—

'No, no!' cried the fair culprit in accents of wild appeal.

'Come, monsieur, come!' exclaimed Cumberlege angrily, for his blood boiled at this gratuitous insult to defenceless beauty; and, further, the suggestion, from some unaccountable reason, seemed somehow to touch him on the raw. 'Isn't that assertion unwarranted?'

The chairman merely shrugged his shoulders.

'Let it pass, Monsieur le Comte. It is immaterial. She betrayed the secret to Prince Zourakoff—that is sufficient. We only yesterday became cognisant of the fact. Our plans are frustrated. Serious complications have arisen. Difficulties and dangers have sprung up on every side. And the cause of all this stands there.' He pointed to the graceful form of the girl as he spoke.

'Have you anything to say in your defence, mademoiselle?' asked Cumberlege kindly.

The young lady looked up, and her round, blue eyes were fastened on Cumberlege with a depth of eloquence such as no man could resist, as she replied:

'I appeal only to your clemency, Monsieur le Comte!' and then let her glance fall once more to the ground.

'Nay,' interposed the chairman. 'Surely this is not a case for clemency! You know the laws of the Order, Count Paul. No member of the society is exempt from the penalties of the society if he be a man. And if she be a woman, only one member may, by special prerogative, claim exemption—and that woman is the wife of the Head of the Order. Count Paul Rassovitch has no wife,' he concluded meaningly.

At these words Cumberlege's heart gave a

quick bound. A sudden flood of inspiration seemed to illumine the difficulties of the situation and point a way of escape. His mind was so overwhelmed by the novel idea that had suggested itself to him that he was scarcely aware for a moment that the chairman had continued speaking. These words, however, aroused him:

'Are we to put it to the vote, Monsieur le Comte?' the chairman demanded.

'The vote—the vote?' echoed Cumberlege.

'Assuredly. It is the usual course, Count. Merely a matter of form.'

'By all means,' said Cumberlege, with a smile, for his mind was now made up. 'By all means, let the usual custom be followed.'

The fair head of Mdlle. Naritzka drooped more dejectedly than ever at this speech, which seemed but to indicate that her appeal had been made in vain. Meantime the chairman again addressed the company.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' said he, 'in accordance with our usual custom, I will now ask you to sanction the sentence of the council prior to its ratification by Count Rassovitch. The sentence is, that the woman, Adèle Naritzka, by reason of her treachery, and in so far as she has betrayed a secret entrusted to her care, involving the most vital issues, shall cease to live. In support of the immediate carrying out of this just sentence you will kindly raise your hands.'

There was a momentary stillness. Then came a sudden spasmodic show of hands. Here and there a member seemed to waver—it may be that Bergstein, for one, hesitated as he glanced at the lovely prisoner, but a taunting smile from Ivan at his elbow decided him, and up went his arm with the rest; 'I keep to my oath,' he muttered again; and in the space of a minute each hand in that pitiless assembly had proclaimed its inexorable fiat against the beautiful Naritzka.

'Brutes!' muttered Cumberlege between his teeth. 'Cowards!'

The man Karamoff heard the words.

'Yes,' he whispered back in English; 'it strikes one so, Monsieur le Comte—eh? But consider the nature of the society! We are not free agents, you comprehend. Yet, hark, sir: the ratification of the sentence lies with you!'

Cumberlege started. In that instant he divined that his imposture had been detected by at least one man in the council. Yet M. Karamoff had not betrayed him. He glanced sharply at his neighbour.

'You wish her to live!' he asked in a low tone.

Karamoff raised his eyebrows and smiled.

'I have my reasons,' he said. 'But a word in your ear. *There is only one way, Monsieur le Comte!*'

'Hush! I know!' Cumberlege whispered back. 'Keep your counsel, man!'

'Count Paul Rassovitch!' called the voice of the chairman.

'Sir!'

'It remains for you to give the order.'

Cumberlege rose to his feet.

'Before I do so,' he said in a loud, clear voice, 'I have yet to persuade myself of one point, which has not so far been made sufficiently clear to me. I desire, monsieur, to have five minutes' private speech with the prisoner. There is a question I wish to put to her, and the question is of a nature that demands absolute privacy. I will, therefore, request you and all the other members to withdraw into another room while I interrogate Mademoiselle Naritzka.'

The blue eyes of the culprit shot a swift glance of gratitude and hope from beneath their deep fringes at Cumberlege as he uttered these words. He noticed the glance, lightning-swift though it was, and smiled. For those sweet blue eyes he swore to himself he would be willing, single-handed, to encounter the entire united forces of Borastria and Rivânia—ay, and, for the matter of that, Russia too. There was a murmur of surprise, almost protest, from the assembled members as he finished speaking. The chairman knitted his brows.

'Pardon, Monsieur le Comte,' he began, 'but the suggestion is against all precedent'—

'Suggestion, sir!' broke in Cumberlege fiercely.

'Who is suggesting, sir? I would have you to know that I do not suggest. When I attend your councils I command!'

The chairman bowed apologetically.

'If you insist, Count'—

'Have done with words, monsieur! Am I the Head of the Order, or are you?'

'Assuredly, Monsieur le Comte, you!'

'Then waste no more time, but do as I bid you. Request all present to withdraw, except Mademoiselle Naritzka.'

The irresistible gesture of authority with which these words were accompanied was not without its effect upon the councillors; one and all they seemed cowed; none exhibited any further inclination to dispute the Count's wishes. Slowly and in obedience to a signal from the chairman they began to file out of the room, and when the last had disappeared, and Karamoff, throwing a significant glance over his shoulder as he did so, had closed the door behind them, Cumberlege at length found himself alone in the chamber with the lovely maiden whose life he had engaged himself to save.

'Now, mademoiselle,' he said, approaching her and speaking in a gentle, decisive, though subdued tone, while he was conscious that his heart beat strangely—'now, mademoiselle, we have but little time. You must trust me. I am your friend!'

His inclinations would have led him to sub-

stitute a less cold word as, once more, the young lady's soft eyes met his, and a smile, half-apprehensive, half-mischievous, hovered over her beautiful mouth.

'Indeed yes, *Monsieur l'Anglais*!' she replied; 'but it is a dangerous game this! Of course, from the first, I knew that you were not the Count, monsieur, in spite of your close resemblance to him!'

'And the others know it?' demanded Cumberlege.

'Only one, monsieur. Karamoff knows it. But—he will not betray you. He has his reasons.'

'Ha! Precisely what he told me himself,' reflected Cumberlege. Then he said, 'No, I am not the Count. But, mademoiselle, a kind Providence has directed me here to take his place—and, mademoiselle, to save from a barbarous and unjust fate the most lovely young lady that ever fell into the hands of heartless and inhuman fiends. Mademoiselle, it is a strange occasion upon which to inaugurate a friendship—a stranger one upon which to declare a passion; yet the moment is one fraught with so imminent a peril that neither ceremony nor sentiment should be permitted to weigh with us against the balance of your safety'—

'And yours, monsieur!' interrupted Mdle. Naritzka anxiously. 'Should the councillors discover your real character before you leave this house, you will, alas! never leave it alive.'

'You think Karamoff will not betray me?'

'Nay, I am sure he will not.'

'Then we have five minutes, mademoiselle. Let us make the most of it. First, my name is Cumberlege—Charles Cumberlege—an Englishman of independent means, though not large fortune, and body and soul at your disposal. Now, tell me: you are innocent of this charge of treachery?'

'Morally, monsieur, I am innocent. It is true Zourakoff has the despatches; but they fell into his hands accidentally. I have a brother, monsieur. I love him. He too is of the Inner Council; but alas! he is weak; he is easily led; he is not—not'—

'Never mind, mademoiselle, what he is not,' interposed Cumberlege, anxious to spare the young lady's feelings. 'Pray continue.'

'He procured the despatches from me, under some pretext or other. He wanted money. Prince Zourakoff offered him a large sum for a copy of the plans, and—and he sold them to him,' faltered the girl. 'I alone knew it, monsieur—and so, you see, it was to—to screen my brother that I gave myself up to the council.'

Cumberlege took Mdle. Naritzka's hand in his, and bowing low over it, pressed it to his lips with a tender reverence.

'Mademoiselle,' he said, 'I thank you. You have taught me what true heroism is.'

TOMMY ATKINS UP TO DATE.



PEOPLE in this country, who take comfort in the reflection that, if the British army is small, it would be found for all practical purposes very hard to match in any country in Europe, will find interesting as well as satisfactory reading in the report by the Inspector-General of Recruiting for last year. Many changes have been introduced during the past twelve months, one or two of them of prime importance. To a man well acquainted (as the writer was) with the British army of thirty years ago, and who, on his return after long absence from his native land, runs against the Tommy Atkins of to-day as he perambulates the London streets in the furlough season, the first thought that comes is: 'Why, these soldiers I meet everywhere, on the streets or at the railway stations, are certainly more sensibly and neatly uniformed than were the *quondam* wearers of the stiff leather stock and the murderous cross-belt; but they seem mostly mere boys under twenty, and even the men of the Foot Guards seem to be of decidedly lower stature than they were in the days when every company had its quota of Crimean medals.'

Thirty years ago the recruit enlisted for a period of twelve years; and if his character and physical condition admitted of it, he could take on for an additional nine years, with a view to securing a pension. It is true that not a large percentage of the enlisted men came off with this desirable prize; but it was always dangling before them as a possibility, and it served well as an inducement to keep the men in the ranks until they were fit for nothing else. And, indeed, there was nothing else for them—no reserved berth of any kind awaiting them at the end of a few years of creditable service with the colours, as is the case with the deserving soldier of to-day; and neither was there a lump sum of deferred pay to tempt a man away from the service when the fit took him to have a couple of months' wild holiday, which would end his military career when he was at his best. Add the fact that a discharge from the infantry by purchase cost twenty pounds, and from the cavalry thirty pounds, and the combined result was, that when a recruit joined his battalion after a few months' drill at the recruit-house, he found himself among men many of whom had seen active service, and almost all of whom were older and more experienced than himself. The oldest soldiers of the company, with their breasts covered with medals, and with a bearing full of a grim sort of dignity, were beings he stood in awe of as much as if they wore the stripes, and, as a matter of fact, the oldest soldier of a barrack-room relieved the non-commissioned officer of the task

of maintaining order among the younger men when off duty.

But the times changed, and Tommy Atkins changed with them—changed, indeed, several times, and not always for the better, since those days. When a young man enters the army now he enlists for twelve years—seven years with the colours and five in the Reserve. If he is an exceptionally useful soldier, however, and if his regiment is not up to its full strength, his period of service with the colours may be extended to twelve years, and again to the twenty-one years necessary for a life-pension. But, until quite recently, an enormous number of men threw down their arms on completing their seven years—about 14,000 men are passed into the Reserve every year; and the chief reason was that they were attracted by a very tempting bait in the shape of their deferred pay, which had been accumulating for seven years, and amounted to twenty-one pounds, and, if abroad, a free passage home to their friends.

The great merit of the reforms introduced last session for the improvement of our military system lies in their common-sense. The soldier is now treated fairly. With the exception of those enlisting in the infantry of the line for three years with the colours and nine years in the Reserve, all now receive (instead of deferred pay) an increase of threepence to their daily pay on becoming efficient soldiers, provided they are nineteen years of age. On transfer to the Reserve or discharge, they also receive a gratuity of one pound for each year of their colour-service up to a limit of twelve pounds. If, however, they serve on until they are entitled to pension, the gratuity is two pounds only. The men enlisted prior to April 1, 1898, were offered an opportunity of availing themselves of these conditions. The report shows that practically all have accepted them, a pretty sure proof that they are popular, and that the old ones were prejudicial to recruiting. The improved system only came into full effect on 1st April last, and even yet the advantages accruing to the soldier are scarcely appreciated by the classes to whom we look to supply the bulk of our recruits.

It was made known at the beginning of the year that the Minister of War had resolved, in view of the proposed increase of the army, to permit Reservists who cared to do so to rejoin the colours without refunding the deferred pay they had received on going into the Reserves. No fewer than 4479 men returned to the colours under these provisions.

Another change, by which the terms of service are three years with the colours and nine with the Reserve for a limited number of men, was introduced in order that, by giving the soldier, as

far as possible, a choice as to the terms under which he serves, a larger number of men of a better sort may be attracted to the army. Henceforward the soldier has, in most cases, the option of serving for seven and five years, or three and nine years, a provision by which the service cannot fail to be rendered more popular with the recruit-giving classes.

One innovation is a most interesting, as it is certain to prove a most beneficial, one. Britain has always some small irregular war on her hands; and to conduct these with thoroughness and economy two qualities are especially required in the soldiers engaged in them—namely, experience and marksmanship. It was with the view of bringing regiments detailed for small wars up to their strength without calling out the Reserve that the formation of 'Section A' of the First-class Army Reserve was determined upon. This Reserve is to consist of 5000; and the men must be of unexceptionable character, within the first year of their Reserve service, and good shots. The liability is for twelve months; and an additional sixpence per day to their ordinary Reserve pay of sixpence is given them. The new section was not formed till October 20, 1898, yet by the end of the year 1360 men had been enrolled. By such modifications as these, Lord Lansdowne has endeavoured to render the service more popular as a calling than ever it was before; and so we believe it will be found as the changes come to be better understood.

'The difficulty with recruiting now,' said a veteran staff-sergeant who was accosted by the writer, 'is that they look at everything so very much from a business point of view. They're not fellows who are broke; they join the ranks because they get so much reliable comfort—food and lodging and time for taking pleasure without being too tired to enjoy it. Still, whenever there is a war-scare on there's always plenty to come up to the scratch. One thing is, there's no good telling lies to them—no good at all. They know very well indeed what they're doing when they come to me.'

Still, they do come. See the smart, well-dressed country candidate, the decent-looking ex-carman, the shy-looking sprig of the educated middle-class, the callous-looking member of the toiling lower class, all ready—nay, eager—to take the Queen's shilling. But lately a baronet's son joined the ranks, and so did the son of a Montreal medical professor in McGill University. Young fellows who have failed at Sandhurst; 'varsity men of spirit, sickened with the dismal prospect of a curacy at seventy-five pounds a year; other young fellows out of a love of adventure and a desire to see the world across the seas; decent mechanics and honest labourers, tired of the monotony of their lives or out of a job through a spree, are all found at the recruiting dépôt.

Let us see what actually are the young soldier's

condition and prospects to-day with the colours. During the past year an addition has been made to the army of 9980 men, so that in the estimates for 1899–1900 the number of men of all ranks in the total of the regular army, exclusive of India, is returned at 184,853. The establishment of British regiments in India is given as 73,157, practically the same as last year.

Tommy Atkins when he first dons his uniform has, broadly speaking, the same chances before him that a youth has who quits his father's house to enter an office in a city of about 258,000 inhabitants. To put it in the briefest possible way, a young soldier on joining the British army to-day may be said to receive in pay, rations, lodging, clothing, &c., the equivalent of not less than fifteen shillings a week, which sum gradually increases according to his conduct and promotion. After deducting all stoppages, a well-conducted soldier has at his own disposal about five shillings a week, most of which he may very easily set aside. For well-conducted soldiers who are also well educated there is a prospect of quick promotion, if professionally fit, and the pay of the non-commissioned officer compares very favourably with the wages of artisans in civil life. An ordinary sergeant of a line regiment gets seventeen shillings and sixpence a week clear money, a colour-sergeant one pound two shillings and twopence, and a quartermaster-sergeant one pound eight shillings; while a regimental sergeant-major gets one pound fifteen shillings, and a superintending clerk one pound eighteen shillings and sixpence. The last two now rank as the warrant-officers of a battalion, as also do the master-gunners of the Royal Artillery.

All these honourable posts are open to the deserving young soldier; but what is not so generally known is, that there are two appointments among the commissioned officers that are filled exclusively by men from the ranks—namely, that of quartermaster—there are 345 of them in the army, with pay at the rate of from nine shillings and sixpence to sixteen shillings and sixpence per day—and that of riding-master, with daily pay varying from ten shillings and sixpence to sixteen shillings and sixpence. After twenty-one years' service, should the soldier get so far—and it is quite possible for him to do so if he wishes, and if there is no physical bar—he is entitled, on discharge, to a pension varying with his rank as follows: Privates, gunners, &c., receive from eightpence to one shilling and sixpence per day; non-commissioned officers, from one shilling and threepence to three shillings and sixpence a day—and let it be noted that there are altogether 14,000 sergeants of every grade in the army; warrant-officers, from three shillings to five shillings per day—and there are 700 of these prizes. Should a soldier during the first three months of his service desire to leave the army, he may claim his discharge on

payment of ten pounds; during last year 1649 men claimed their discharge on this footing. After three months' service the sum will be eighteen pounds, and the permission of the officer commanding is necessary. Discharges by purchase are allowed to the fullest extent consistent with the requirements of the service; last year 1574 men were allowed to leave on payment of eighteen pounds. This is called 'discharge by indulgence.'

Such, put in a nutshell, is the position of the British soldier to-day, and even on this bare showing, without taking any account of his many special privileges, one may safely assert that, even from a mere business point of view, there are worse trades than that of the soldier.

But there are 'side-shows' in the army—if we may so dub the auxiliary branches of it—of which the public never hears, because, though the men belonging to them are regularly drilled as soldiers, their duties are non-combatant; and though they share in the dangers of a campaign, they have no part in the glory of the battlefield. Yet they have the best 'plums' in the army for all that. Two of these auxiliary arms of the service may be instanced: the Medical Staff Corps and the Army Service Corps. The former is under the immediate command of the Director-General, Army Medical Department, and is intended for the performance of duties connected with the military hospitals, and for rendering assistance to the sick and wounded in time of war. This branch provides for an unusually large number of warrant and non-commissioned officers—namely, one out of every four men; and as the quartermasters of the Army Medical Staff are selected from the warrant-officers of the same corps, there is also a 'very good prospect of those who merit such advancement rising to commissioned rank. The Army Service Corps is composed of clerks, tradesmen, and artisans of almost every sort, and the recruits for it are required to be able to read and write and to produce certificates of good character. They must be from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, and measure from five feet three inches to five feet five inches. In this arm of the service, which is composed chiefly of little men, the prospects of promotion are exceptionally good, owing to the large number of warrant and non-commissioned officers on its establishment. The weekly rates of ordinary pay are as follows: Warrant-officers, from one pound sixteen shillings and ninepence to two pounds two shillings; staff-sergeants, one pound six shillings and threepence to one pound thirteen shillings and threepence; sergeant, eighteen shillings and a penny; private, eight shillings and twopence. But this is not all. In addition to the above, corps pay is granted to all men below the rank of staff-sergeant, at rates varying from one shilling and ninepence to eight shillings and twopence per week; and good-conduct pay is

also granted according to length of service. The gratuities on transfer to the Reserve are the same as in other branches of the service.

Throughout the army, soldiers serving with the colours, who are medically fit for service, may re-engage to complete twenty-one years' service under the following conditions: Warrant-officers and sergeants, after nine years' service, have the right to re-engage, subject to the veto only of the Secretary of State for War. Corporals, bombardiers, bandsmen, and artificers, after nine years' service, may re-engage with the permission of their commanding officers. Other soldiers of good character may re-engage after completing eleven years' service. Warrant-officers have, at any time, the right to extend their service to twelve years with the colours; and non-commissioned officers, after a year's probation, have the same right. Non-commissioned officers who fail to exercise this right, and other soldiers, will be permitted, after three years' service and under certain conditions, to extend their service to twelve years with the colours. Men enlisted for three years with the colours and nine years with the Reserve may *at any time* be permitted to extend their service to seven years, and subsequently, under certain restrictions, to twelve years, with the colours. One often hears it idly said that there are now no long-service pensions granted in the army. The reader can easily make out from the foregoing statements that the way to such a pension is to-day as unobstructed in the army as it ever was.

To sum up the advantages offered by a career in the army to a well-conducted, well-educated, and ambitious youth, in addition to the commissioned appointments of quartermaster and riding-master (there are but fifty of the latter), a limited number of non-commissioned officers, who are recommended by their commanding officers, and who are able to pass the qualifying examination, are annually selected for commissions as second lieutenants; but without a private income such a promotion is often a snare. The quartermaster is in very different case; for, besides his substantial pay, he has separate quarters and other allowances, which make his position one of the most independent, if one of the busiest, in the regiment. Much more, in fact, depends on non-commissioned officers in the English army than in that of other countries, for with us the colour-sergeants are the company chiefs, and are only controlled by their respective captains. A warrant-officer or sergeant has the right to re-engage for a further term of nine years after twelve years' service, after which further term he will receive a pension, or have the right of serving in the Militia. Thus, a young man who selects the army for his calling, provided he does not misbehave himself, has before him a military career for twenty-one years, after which time he can join the Militia of

his own district, where he will find many comrades from his own regiment.

But now, suppose the soldier has no wish to serve long enough to secure the coveted life-pension, and on completing his term prefers to enter civil life, either as a Reserve soldier or a discharged one, what are his chances of obtaining employment? First, there is already a certain amount of Government employment reserved for him. The Postmaster-General has decided that certain vacancies among provincial letter-carriers and the auxiliary postmen in London are in future to be offered to discharged soldiers and Army Reserve men of good character. Work is also provided for many old soldiers in the Royal Arsenal, the Royal Army Clothing Department, the Army Ordnance Department, the Customs, and other Government departments. Secondly, many ex-soldiers obtain employment in the Metropolitan police, and in borough police and county constabulary throughout the United Kingdom. Thirdly, employment for deserving soldiers is likewise afforded by many of the railway companies and in the Corps of Commissionaires. Fourthly, a register for civil employment is kept at the headquarters of all regimental districts, with the view of assisting discharged or transferred soldiers of good character to obtain employment in civil life. Fifthly, a National Association for the Employment of Reserve and Discharged Soldiers has been established for the purpose of intro-

ducing to employers of labour soldiers of reliable character, on their discharge or transfer to the Reserve. Men are registered without fee at the offices of this association for employment as clerks, collectors, attendants, caretakers, time-keepers, night-watchmen, conductors, carmen, policemen, musicians, grooms, porters, labourers, servants, &c. The chief office of the association is at 12 Buckingham Street, Strand, London, and numerous branch offices have been established in other large towns.

Employers in need of men for show purposes often send in applications. Giants of six feet four inches from the Guards are in great demand for standing in gorgeous uniform outside shops and safe deposits, and sometimes outside the theatres. A draper who was running a big sale cleared out the office once. And let this extraordinary and highly creditable fact be well noted: 'Of all the thousands the establishment has found work for,' said the secretary, Colonel Handley, from whom most of these particulars were obtained, 'not one has ever been accused of dishonesty.'

One word, in conclusion, about the darkest spot in Tommy Atkins's record for the past year. There were 4107 deserters, and 1789 discovered their mistake and, like wise men, returned to the ranks before they drifted, as they would have done, into mischief and ruined themselves for life.

A VISIT TO THE SEVEN HUNTERS.

By W. J. GIBSON.



WHO or what are the Seven Hunters?' is naturally the first question of the reader. The Seven Hunters, or Flannan Isles, is a group of rocky islets lying in the Atlantic, sixteen miles west of the westernmost point of Lewis. They thus share with St Kilda, which is over forty miles to the south-west of them, the doubtful honour of forming part of the outlying rocky picket that amid the Atlantic breakers guards the western coast of the Hebrides. Unlike St Kilda, they are not inhabited. Their small size and the difficulty of obtaining water would be sufficient to account for this. A few sheep, however, are pastured on them by the people of the part of Lewis lying opposite. These are put on when young and taken off when ready for the market. The crop of grass, kept short by the sea-winds, seems to afford sweet nibbling, for the sheep thrive on it; and Flannan Island mutton has a good reputation. Nature seems to have been kinder three hundred and fifty years ago than she is now, for then there was no need to place sheep on the islands, there being already 'infinite wyld sheipe therein.'

Donald Munro, High Dean of the Isles, who visited the Western Islands in 1549, has left the following quaint account of the Flannans, which he calls the 'seven Haley Isles':

'50 myle in the Occident seas from the coste of the parochin Vye in Lewis, towarts the west-north-west, lyes the seven iles of Flannayn, claid with girth, and Haley iles, verey natural gressing within thir saids iles; infinit wyld sheipe therein, quhilk na man knaves to quhoim the said sheipe appertaines within them that lives this day of the countrymen; bot M'Cloyd of the Lewis, at certaine tymes in the yeir, sendis men in, and huntis and slayis maney of thir sheipe. The flesche of thir sheipe cannot be eaten be honest men for fatnesse, for there is na flesche on them bot all quhyte lyke talloune, and it is verey wyld gusted lykways. The saids iles are noudir manurit nor inhabit, bot full of grein high hills, full of wyld sheipe in the seven iles forsaid, quhilk may not be outrune.'

The people from the mainland of Lewis have been in the habit of going periodically to the islands at the bird-nesting season; but with the exception of these occasional visits and those to

put on and take off the sheep, the islands lie lonely and unvisited amid the continual fret and roar of the Atlantic rollers. These outlying islets, and the rocky shores of Lewis opposite to them, are in the path of ships from the western continent when sailing round the north coast of Scotland, and in the absence of any warning light many a poor ship has here found her doom. A wreck on the Flannan Islands would mean simply another ship added to the list of those that every year disappear no man knows whither; for an uninhabited island showing on every face precipitous cliffs running down into deep water keeps no trace of sea-disasters. A dark or foggy night, a vessel a little out of her course running before a gale, a shadowy mass of rock against which she rushes stem on, a crash, a shriek mayhap, and the howling winds and roaring waters sing their requiem over a tragedy whose only traces now lie far down amid the secrets of the sea. Recognising the danger to navigation offered by these coasts, the Lighthouse Commissioners several years ago arranged for the building of a lighthouse on the top of the largest of the group; and the work, for the last four years in the hands of a competent contractor, is now nearing completion.

At midnight on a calm July evening, still lit by the glow from the western sky, the writer left Breasclet, an anchorage well up the long sea-firth of Loch Roag. Supplies and material for the operations on the island are regularly shipped here by a stout little tug chartered for the purpose by the contractor. To keep a work of this kind supplied with material, and to provide over fifty workmen on the rock not only with food but, what is even more important, with fresh water, and to do this each time after a run of thirty miles on what is proverbially one of our stormiest coasts, adds not a little to the difficult task of lighthouse construction. We steamed down the still waters of the loch, having on our left hand the island of Great Bernera, and on our right the black, vaguely-outlined masses of the mainland of Lewis. In about an hour we anchored off Little Bernera to load sand. Black rocks on both sides, and in front the glimmer of a sandy beach, beyond which rose a wind-drifted ridge of sand, made up the picture. Over the rock to the right peeped, from the northern side of the loch, the continually winking eye of a little light which, always burning, guides the fishing-boats as they creep round in the dark to Carloway Harbour. About two o'clock the glow in the sky began to strengthen as the dawn stole up. The row of sand-bags on the beach grew more distinct, and the moving figures of the men less mysterious and stealthy-looking. On the height to our left the walls of a vault began to show distinctly; for Little Bernera, though uninhabited, contains the chief burying-ground of a very considerable district. One

cannot think of a more peaceful 'God's acre' than this, with no habitation near nor sound of men, but only the wail of the sea-bird and the dirge of wind and wave. The island shows traces of having been previously inhabited, and some say that it is the scene of William Black's famous novel, and claim it as the spot where 'the Princess' had her home. Soon our bows were headed for the open sea, and as we left the narrower waters of the loch behind we were caught up on the long swing of the Atlantic; not a heavy sea, but enough to remind a landsman that the swell was from the ocean.

In four hours we find ourselves at the Islands. The stopping of the engine brings us on deck, to find facing us a gray front of rock rising precipitously to a height of over a hundred feet. There is a great gash in its face, clean cut on the edges and without a trace of vegetation. At the top the cliff slopes backward, and patches of grass and green clumps of the wild chamomile, gay with white blossoms, brighten up the grayness of the rock. As the rocks run sheer down into the water there is no beach, and at first sight there seems no possibility of landing, although two hand-cranes clinging like huge spiders to the face of the cliff give evidence of the work that is in progress. Closer inspection shows a concrete stair in process of construction up the face of the rock, and at the foot of this we attempt a landing from the ship's boat. The waves swing the boat along, and it bobs up and down in an uncertain way, as the sparkling green water breaks in white foam against the cliff; but with a little difficulty we find ourselves on the bottom step, and with the help of the stairway and a little judicious scrambling we are soon on the grassy top, two or three hundred feet above the sea.

The islets are in two groups, an eastern and a western. Eilean Mòr, on which we stand, is the largest of the islands, and is a grass-crowned mass of gray gneiss, measuring about five hundred yards in length by two hundred in breadth. The top slopes considerably to the south-west, and is covered with a close mat of short grass decorated with sea-pinks and diminutive buttercups and ragged-robins. On the highest point is the lighthouse, now almost completed, a strange combination of grace and stolid strength. From its base, where are the engine-room, storerooms, and kitchen, rises a short tower capped by the crystal dome of the lantern.

A feature of interest in the island is the bird-life. Rows and rows of orange-beaked and orange-footed puffins sit on the ledges of the rocks and on the top of the cliff with a solemn air that is irresistibly comic. On other ledges may be seen groups of razorbills, if possible more solemn, for their pure white bosoms, glossy black backs, and black bills and feet give them a sacerdotal appearance that accords well with the gravity of

their demeanour. Along with these may be seen gulls with yellow beaks, white breasts, and gray wings tipped with black. There is no air of solemnity about them; on the contrary, there is a bold vociferousness that sometimes almost becomes insulting when one of them flies past with jeering shrieks that are suggestive of offensive personalities. The puffins have the peaty earth at the top of the cliff excavated into short burrows, in which they lay their eggs and hatch their young. As we looked a gull was moving about jauntily among the puffins, peering inquisitively into each burrow as he passed—a bold, bad bird evidently, soliloquising on the suitability of fat young puffins for breakfast. The parent puffins that were sitting by made no attempt to show fight, nor did they move far out of his way. They are, however, much given to fighting among themselves. When thus engaged the puffin seems to forget everything except his adversary. One pair we saw got their bills locked together during their fighting, and tumbled over each other and rolled head over heels down the rocks with the most charming abandon. They are a little more shy now of allowing one to approach than they were when the workmen first came to the island, but they will still sit stolidly until you are within a couple of yards.

Near the middle of the island is an ancient stone building of very small size, said to have been connected in some way with the St Flannan after whom the islands are supposed to be named. According to the authorities on ecclesiastical antiquities, St Flannan was, in the seventh century, the first bishop of Killaloe, and several small islands in Ireland have been named in his honour. The chapel or cell is a tiny erection of flat unhewn stones, with considerable spaces between them. Its roof is constructed of some of the larger and flatter stones, each overlapping the one below until they meet in the centre. The gables, unlike those of the native Lewis houses, are vertical and rise to a peak. The doorway is in the western gable, and is a hole about two feet square. The interior measurement of the cell is about six feet by five. Ancient saints were evidently content with scantier accommodation than suits the modern ones.

Near the western end of the island are the remains of two other low buildings of stone, the largest of them being about eight feet square; but what their age or what their purpose is not apparent. Not far from these is a line of stones running across the island, as if intended to serve as a boundary. These are all the traces of man's handiwork observable, but there is no doubt that from early times the islands have been periodically visited by the inhabitants of Lewis for purposes of fowling and to take off the sheep pastured on them.

Martin Martin, Gent., who visited the Western Islands about 1695, gives the following description

of the Flannan Islands and the curious customs connected with them two hundred years ago: 'To the north-west of Gallan-head, and within six leagues of it, lie the Flannan Islands, which the seamen call North-Hunters; they are but small islands and six in number, and maintain about seventy sheep yearly. The inhabitants of the adjacent lands of the Lewis, having a right to these islands, visit them once every summer, and there make a great purchase of fowls, eggs, down, feathers, and quills. When they go to sea they have their boat well manned, and make towards the islands with an east wind; but if before or at the landing the wind turn westerly, they hoist up sail and steer directly home again. If any of their crew is a novice, and not versed in the customs of the place, he must be instructed perfectly in all the punctilios observed here before landing; and to prevent inconveniences that they think may ensue upon the transgression of the least nicety observed here, every novice is always joined with another, that can instruct him all the time of their fowling: so all the boat's crew are matched in this manner. After their landing they fasten the boat to the sides of a rock, and then fix a wooden ladder, by laying a stone at the foot of it, to prevent its falling into the sea; and when they are got up into the island, all of them uncover their heads, and make a turn sun-ways round thanking God for their safety. . . . One of their principal customs is not to steal or eat anything unknown to their partner, else the transgressor (they say) will certainly vomit it up; which they reckon as a just judgment. The biggest of these islands is called Island-More; it has the ruins of a chapel dedicated to St Flannan, from whom the island derives its name. When they are come within about twenty paces of the altar, they all strip themselves of their upper garments at once; and their upper clothes being laid upon a stone, which stands there on purpose for that use, all the crew pray three times before they begin fowling: the first day they say the first prayer, advancing towards the chapel upon their knees; the second prayer is said as they go round the chapel; the third is said hard by or at the chapel; and this is their morning service. Their vespers are performed with the like number of prayers. I had this superstitious account not only from several of the natives of the Lewis, but likewise from two who had been in the Flannan Islands the preceding year. I asked one of them if he prayed at home as often and as fervently as in the Flannan Islands, and he plainly confessed to me that he did not: adding further that these remote islands were places of inherent sanctity, and that there was none ever yet landed in them but found himself more disposed to devotion there than anywhere else.'

When we landed on the island in the morning the position of St Kilda had been marked by a

patch of white cloud on the horizon to the south-west. In the afternoon the sun came out, the cloud melted away, and the outlines of the St Kilda group showed high and clear against the sky. The only other land in sight was the coast of Lewis on the east. After wandering over and round the island we lay down at last on the greensward while eye and ear took in the features of the scene—the sunshine, the pure clear air, the gleam of the sea; the white fringe of broken water running up the rocks of the neighbouring islet, only to fall back again; the lazy seal floating on the edge of the foam; the blue sky flecked with white; and the perfect peacefulness that

brooded over all. In the evening we again embarked, pleased to have had a whole day of sea and sky, and with gratitude to the officials whose ready courtesy had made such a day possible. We steamed eastward over a quiet sea, leaving behind us a sunset sky of greens and reds, to which nothing but the brush of a Turner could have done justice; and as we went we took with us a fresh appreciation of wild nature and a renewed respect for the constructive skill and energy of the men who, in spite of all difficulties, have marked out with friendly lights the dangerous reefs and shoals of our rock-bound coasts.

DIPS INTO A DOCTOR'S DIARY.



WHEN the young and aspiring medico has 'put up his plate' and launched himself on the troubled sea of private practice he is not long in making the discovery that hitherto he has had all his real difficulties before him. Unless he possesses considerable influence, or has first-class introductions, or has already in some way so far distinguished himself as to have attracted attention, he finds that private practice is a precarious means of livelihood, and, amid the harassments of daily life, is apt to lose the fine edge of true professional enthusiasm in the hard grind of making a living.

Should he succeed in forming a connection, he speedily finds that there is a wide difference between hospital work and independent practice, or between the position of assistant and that of entirely responsible practitioner. Particularly does he feel at sea if, as in my case, he passes at once into practice on his own account without having spent some time in association with an experienced private practitioner. Probably he has had a spell of house-physician's or house-surgeon's work in some hospital or infirmary. In that position the cases which have come under his care have been well defined and amenable to treatment. For the most part complicated and hopeless cases are not admitted to general hospitals; and at the worst the young house-surgeon had the longer experience and wider knowledge of the visiting doctors to fall back upon in cases of exceptionally difficult diagnosis and treatment.

But now he is called in to all sorts of cases, many of which present very mixed conditions and symptoms indeed. His text-books, while giving him general principles and many illustrations, cannot set forth every possible complication of an ailment. Except in grave emergencies, his patients do not care to go to the expense of a

'consultation.' The young doctor may have a senior friend with whom he can take counsel; but he is compelled practically to stand alone and to accept the responsibility of diagnosis and treatment, while any display of uncertainty or hesitancy on his part would forfeit confidence and ruin his prospects. If I may make a transition from the third person to the first, and, for the sake of clearness, deal with my own experiences, I frankly confess that in the early days of my practice I often felt bewilderment, and was inclined to attribute the recovery of my patients almost as much to good luck as to my own management. Of course I did my best, and in serious cases did not hesitate to counsel further advice; but knowledge of the ins and outs of disease—complicated by a hundred things which are apt to upset one's calculations—had to be gained by long and close observation and comparison. The training of medical students now is far and away in advance of what was attainable in my student days; but even now a beginner needs to carry into private practice a well-stored and retentive memory, the results of accurate observation, a good deal of 'gumption,' and the power of allowing for differences of bodily habit, nutrition, environment, &c.

I soon found that in a medical sense I was expected to be 'all things to all men,' ready to treat all sorts of diverse cases with promptitude and confidence; and sometimes I used to wish that my patients possessed the nice discrimination manifested by one of my hospital applicants a short time before I abandoned my post there. A collier, suffering from an abscess, was ushered into the consulting-room; but before he would permit examination he wished to ascertain what kind of treatment he was likely to receive at my hands. Said he, 'Are you the cuttin' doctor or the poulticin' doctor? Because it's the poulticin' doctor I want.' But now I had to cut or poultice as the case might demand; to

act as surgeon or physician with equal readiness and skill.

As an illustration of the variety of a young doctor's experiences I cull from my diary of the early-practice period the record of cases visited in one day. It may be regarded as a fairly representative day.

After having been called up to one of those domestic affairs which have an aggravating way of happening in the middle of the night, I was trying to get an hour's sleep before early surgery hours, when an urgent call came to visit a new case—that of a man suffering from *dementia*. He had shown signs of mental peculiarity for some weeks, but had now become uncontrollable. He was not violent, but obstinate; and his mania took a curious and comical form. I found him gravely and laboriously descending the stairs in a most uncomfortable manner—namely, in a sitting posture. His friends said he had kept it up all night; ascending the flight of steps, sitting down, and bumping his way down step by step. A good deal of persuasion and a little force succeeded in getting him to bed, in a very exhausted condition. He rapidly became worse, and in a few days had to be removed to an asylum for the insane.

Immediately on regaining my residence I was summoned—indeed, I found the summons awaiting me—to another case of insanity, this time of a suicidal description, which had been in my care for some time. A week earlier the patient, when left alone for half-an-hour, had turned on the gas in her bedroom, thus attempting to put an end to her life by suffocation. Now she had eluded the nurse in charge of her, and had swallowed the contents of a bottle of poisonous lotion which had been carelessly left within her reach. It required an hour's hard work to bring her round and place her out of danger. I was compelled to overcome the reluctance of her friends to send her away, and she also was placed under restraint away from home.

By this time my surgery patients had been kept waiting some time, and I found them in by no means the best of temper at my late arrival. Then ensued the usual round of consultations, in which, despite the deep sympathy with which a doctor is supposed to listen to the detailed description of his patients' ailments, an exasperating verbosity much tried my patience. Each case dealt with as fully as possible, and the last of the batch dismissed, a hasty meal was snatched, and off I hastened on my visits. In those days the practice didn't run to a carriage, while it was in that transition state when the work was too much for one and the income not large enough to admit of my keeping an assistant; so I had to trudge on foot, and with as much expedition as possible. The ordinary number of sad and depressing cases of consumption and other lung diseases were taken first, as far as geography

would permit; then a troublesome and disgusting case of *delirium tremens*, the patient, among other vagaries, beseeching me to tread carefully, as big tacks were growing up visibly all over his room.

Another unpleasant case that day was one of hysteria—on the peculiarities and diversities of which a volume might be written by any medical man of twenty years' experience. I found the patient's relatives much perturbed by a sudden and unaccountable spitting of blood. Careful examination and stern questioning and plain accusation elicited the confession that she had pricked the roof of her mouth with a needle in order to simulate blood-spitting, that she might frighten her relatives. In such a case hospital experiences aided me considerably.

Then a case or two of typhoid, and 'after that' three or four of whooping-cough and measles and lesser ailments among children, were attended to, and the afternoon was well advanced before I reached home—tired and hungry, only to find awaiting me an urgent summons to another of those cases which tend to allay one's fears as to any danger of the dying out of the race yet awhile.

Attendance at the surgery, a call to an accident—which meant the replacing of a dislocated shoulder—and a round of revisits to the more serious cases, and two or three calls on fresh patients, and a few on some of older standing not seen earlier in the day, brought bedtime—and found a tired man ready for it. But my night was not to be undisturbed, for at two o'clock in the morning my newly-made, stair-bumping acquaintance could not be pacified without seeing the doctor, his 'oldest and last remaining friend in the world,' he declared.

It was a wearing life in those days of single-handedness, when each journey had to be made on foot—before a brougham and assistants were possible; but I was happy in it, and found immense interest, as experience grew, in unravelling the mysteries of disease and cure, and felt unspeakable delight in alleviating pain and suffering. And the life was not without its lighter touches; for, while aggravation and discouragements were often to be found in the fads and unreasonableness of some patients, amusement was also to be found therein. For example, I had a patient who always wore five suits of clothes at the same time, summer and winter. He was really not suffering from any bodily ailment whatever; but he regularly called me in for consultation, and the guineas which he insisted on paying were very useful to an impecunious beginner.

I once received a great fright, and a lesson in the truth of the saying, 'A little learning is a dangerous thing,' at one and the same time. Among my child-patients was a little girl who was down with a severe attack of measles. As there was a good deal of bronchial and threatened

lung-complication, I prescribed constant poulticing, back and front. At the end of my morning visit the little one's mother had said, 'Now, doctor, if there is any rise of temperature'—she was great on temperature, by the way—'I will send for you at once. As you know, I have a clinical thermometer, and can take the temperature myself without troubling you to come in for the purpose.' Just as I was going to bed I was startled by a violent ring at the bell, and, hastening to the door, saw a terrified domestic, who gasped, 'Oh, sir, please, sir, do come round at once! Miss Marjory is worse. Missus said I was to tell you her temperature is 108, and is risin' fast.' Scarcely waiting to put on my hat, I rushed round to the house of my little patient, and discovered the whole family assembled in the sick-room awaiting the end of poor little Marjory, the mother wringing her hands in agony and crying dreadfully. 'What's the temperature now?' I almost shouted in my agitation. 'Oh!' sobbed the mother, 'I haven't dared to look since. My poor darling! It was 108, and they say that 105 is always fatal;' and she broke down completely. Without wasting any more time, I turned down the blanket, and—found that the thermometer had been thrust between the child's side and arm, and the bulb embedded in a freshly-applied hot poultice!

Whether the following instance is to be regarded as indicating unbounded faith in the doctor's prognostications, or must be looked upon as showing lack of faith in his power of effecting a cure, I leave my readers to determine. It happened in my own practice, but, as good stories generally become common property, has probably been fathered on others also. A man had been at death's door for days, and, having abandoned all hope, I had prepared his wife for the worst. However, the patient took an astonishing turn for the better—as much to my surprise as to that of any one else. On coming down from his room, highly delighted, I said to his wife, 'I think you may hope for recovery now. I believe he has turned the corner.' Instead of showing joy, her face fell, and she said, 'Oh dear! and I've sold all his clothes.'

Of a somewhat similar character was a case which occurred in the practice of an intimate friend of my own in a northern county. His patient, a collier, had made a brave fight for life, but had been defeated. All hope of recovery was gone; and my friend said to the dying man's wife, 'It is of no further use placing any restrictions on diet. You may let him eat anything that he may fancy.' The good woman, who was relieved by the doctor's permission—for she had found her husband by no means a tractable subject in the matter of diet—went upstairs, and said, 'Is there owt tha could fancy to eat? The doctor says tha can hev owt tha fancies now.' 'Ay,' replied the sinking but hungry man, 'I

should like a bit o' that ham as I cured afore I was ta'en bad.' Said his wife firmly, 'Nay, tha can hev owt else tha likes, but we're savin' that ham for the funeral.'

FAIRY GOLD.

THERE's fairy gold upon the moor—the blossoms of the gorse:

The gold which comes and shines and dies with every season's course;

The gold which, with its glamour, binds the children of the soil,

And winds around the hearts which ache, the weary hands which toil.

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

With eyes like violets wet, she sees a vision of the years, And of the home in alien land where, only through her tears,

That fairy gold shall she behold, or feel the soft breath more

Which, with the perfume of the gorse, played round her cabin-door.

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

She clasps the letter from her kin, with loving words and true;

'And leave,' they say, 'the poor old land, the worm-wood and the rue

'Of hunger-pang and cold and want—you'll never know them more;

'Alanna! come across the seas; come home to us, ashore.'

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

A thousand sounds are on the breeze: the shiver of the rush,

The curlew's cry, and from on high the wild, sweet songs that gush

As though the lark's heart burst with joy; and, dearer than them all,

A voice to which her pulses thrill. Ah! wherefore doth it call?

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

The flowers of the gorse are spent, the moor is gray and cold,

Dark clouds have curtained o'er the sky; there's no more fairy gold.

But a grave in yon lone churchyard, by a lover's falsehood made:

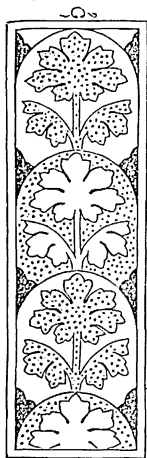
Ah! woe the day, poor Aileen, when thy parting steps he stayed.

For winter came, and love grew cold;

And fairy weavers of the gold

Were fain to let thee go!

MARY GORGES.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE HEROINE OF LYDENBERG.

AN EPISODE IN THE TRANSVAAL WAR OF 1880-81.

By W. WILMOTT DIXON.



ONE forgets many things in eighteen years; and probably the story which I purpose retelling here is forgotten by all except the surviving actors in it and their immediate friends. But the memory of such

a signal instance of British pluck should not be allowed to die.

On Sunday the 5th of December 1880 the little town of Lydenberg, in the Transvaal, was in a state of unwonted excitement. The whole population was out in its Sunday best to give a hearty send off to the 94th Regiment, which had been quartered there for many months, and was now ordered to Pretoria. Both officers and men had made themselves extremely popular with all classes, and the expressions of regret at their departure were universal. Numbers of the inhabitants accompanied the regiment on its way for five or six miles. One lady and gentleman—Lieutenant Walter Long, the junior subaltern of the 94th, and his pretty young wife—rode out as far as fifteen miles. The colonel had paid the lieutenant the high honour of leaving him in sole command of the troops left behind—a responsible position for a youngster of barely two-and-twenty.

As the lieutenant and his wife turned their horses' heads and bade farewell to their comrades Colonel Anstruther called out:

'Good-bye, Mrs Long! Look after Long, and mind you're a good little adjutant. Good-bye, Long! Look after my garden for me; remember I expect to find it in as good order as I leave it.'

Both the colonel and the lieutenant were enthusiastic gardeners.

As the regiment tramped past, Mrs Long cried out:

'Good-bye, 94th! God bless you!'

And the men shouted back:

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'Good-bye, *our* lady! God bless you, Mrs Long!'

It was a last farewell for many of them, though they little thought it; for a fortnight later Colonel Anstruther and more than half his men were killed at Bronkhorst Spruit.

Out on the open veldt, about half a mile from the town, were eight military huts, each fifty feet long by eighteen feet wide, built two abreast, with an intervening space of thirty feet, the whole forming a parallelogram seventy-eight yards in length by twenty in breadth. At the first rumour of disaffection among the Boers, Lieutenant Long resolved to withdraw his men into these huts, and throw up some kind of shelter round them, for up to this time they stood without the slightest enclosure, and utterly unprotected. The force under his command consisted of fifty privates and three non-commissioned officers of the 94th, seven privates and a sergeant of the Royal Engineers, three privates and a conductor of the Army Service Corps—in all, including Dr Falvey, of the Army Medical Department, and Lieutenant Long himself, sixty-six officers and men.

Mrs Long, who had been living with her husband in a pretty little cottage embowered in roses and fruit-trees at the lower end of the town, without a moment's hesitation decided to leave her comfortable home and take up her quarters with her husband. Her many friends in Lydenberg tried in vain to dissuade her from the step. She was offered a warm welcome in half-a-dozen houses; but the brave little woman said that her place was beside her husband. So the soldiers brought her belongings from the pretty cottage to one of the huts, and showed their admiration for her pluck by taking the greatest pains in making her quarters as tasteful and comfortable as possible. There was, however, but scant accommodation for a lady in the hut assigned to her, which sheltered

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under its roof three horses (whose every movement was distinctly audible) besides herself and her husband.

On the 16th of December they began throwing up works of defence round the huts, and Mrs Long delighted the men by working as hard as any of them. On the 23d of December the appalling news reached them of the massacre of the 94th at Bronkhorst Spruit. But, stunned though they were by the terrible tidings, they set to work more vigorously than ever to complete their defences. When the tiny fort was finished it was christened Fort Mary, in honour of Mrs Long; and Father Walsh, a Roman Catholic priest who had elected to cast in his lot with the little garrison, formally blessed it.

An envoy from the Boers, Dietrick Müller, appeared, on the 27th of December, with a proposal that the garrison should surrender and accept a safe-conduct into Natal. His surprise at the youthful appearance of the commandant of the fort was great. 'Dat younker!' he exclaimed in contempt. But 'dat younker' was not so green as Mr Müller imagined. He suggested writing to Pretoria for instructions. Müller consented, and Lieutenant Long thus cleverly gained a delay of five days, which he utilised in very materially strengthening his defences.

On the 4th of January the Boers appeared in force, some seven hundred of them, and formally demanded surrender of the fort; to which summons the young subaltern returned the spirited reply: 'It is inconsistent with my duty as a soldier to surrender my trust.' An urgent appeal was once more made by Mrs Long's friends in the town to induce her to quit the fort and take up her residence in one of the many homes placed at her disposal. But she stoutly refused.

Two days afterwards the attack commenced. For three hours and a half seven hundred Boers kept up a continuous rifle-fire upon the little fort at a range of five hundred yards. In her own charmingly modest and simple narrative, Mrs Long thus describes her feelings when she first found herself under fire:

'I must humbly confess that during the first hour of the firing I was dreadfully frightened, and took refuge under a table, for its imaginary shelter. Father Walsh, entering the hut at that moment, with his breviary in his hand, to look for me, and not finding me, as he expected, called me. I lifted the tablecover and popped my head out, saying, "Here I am, Father!" My position struck me as so ludicrous that I burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Not till 4 P.M. was I able to ascertain that, notwithstanding the terrible fire of the last four hours, not a man had been wounded. My husband, knowing how anxious I should be as to his safety, looked in as often as he could to cheer me.'

But she very soon overcame these natural terrors, and got so used to the firing, even when the Boers

brought a couple of cannon to bear on the fort, that she frequently slept right through the cannonade.

What with tending the sick and wounded, and making sandbags, sometimes turning out as many as four dozen of them in a day, Mrs Long's time was fully occupied. Think of her there, one woman, little more than a girl, alone among sixty men fighting for their lives against ten times their number! What wonder that the men fought like heroes with this daintily-bred English lady sharing all their dangers and setting them an example of patience and courage and cheerfulness. She admitted that at first she felt the absence of any of her own sex keenly. But the soldiers were so devoted to her, so delicate in their solicitude and consideration for her, that she soon lost the sense of loneliness.

One day a strange messenger arrived, a little black-and-tan terrier, with a piece of paper folded in a rag tied round its neck. It was a communication from some friendly townsfolk informing them that the Boers were quarrelling among themselves, furious with Dietrick Müller for being such a fool as to allow the English those five days to complete their defences; and adding, as a hint, that the defenders of the fort were firing too high—which hint, I need hardly say, was quickly taken.

The garrison had nothing in the shape of a gun with which to meet the fire of the two six-pounders that the Boers had in position. But one day Mrs Long suggested to one of the Army Service men that the 'monkey' of an Abyssinian pump which they had might perhaps be utilised. The idea was promptly seized upon and ingeniously carried into execution; and the Boers were very much amazed when a cylindrical shot weighing two pounds six ounces, formed of round crowbar iron cased in lead, came crashing in amongst them. 'Mrs Long's gun,' as it was christened, proved a very valuable addition to the armament of Fort Mary.

The huts were riddled through and through with round-shot and rifle-bullets, and the escapes from death were so miraculous that Lieutenant Long twice had the men assembled for a special thanksgiving service conducted by Father Walsh. On one occasion a cannon-shot struck the wall within an inch of Mrs Long's head and covered her with dust and débris.

Another time the hut in which she lived came down about her ears, and her escape from being crushed in the ruins was marvellous. But she must needs, woman-like, go back to rescue her 'things,' and expressed truly feminine sorrow to find her best bonnet smashed as flat as a pancake, and only one cup, two saucers, and a couple of plates left of all her cherished crockery.

Meanwhile the men kept up their spirits with music and dancing. 'Hold the Fort,' with a strictly local application, was a favourite chorus,

and the men invented a version of the famous Jingo song :

We don't want to fight ; but, by Jingo ! if we do,
We've got the pluck, we've got the men, and ammunition too.

We've fought the Zulu king and Sekekuni too,
And the Boers shall never get into Fort Mary.

And they never did, though they tried their utmost to drive out the gallant defenders with cannon and rifles, and, what was worse, 'Greek-fire' shot in metallic tubes into the thatch of the roofs. Perhaps if the Boers could only have summoned up courage to make a determined assault whilst the huts were blazing and half the garrison occupied in putting out the flames, they might have captured the fort. But the Boers are not dashing fighters, and they did not care to meet the stubborn defenders of Fort Mary hand to hand. So they contented themselves with potting at the gallant fellows who fearlessly exposed themselves in their efforts to extinguish the fire. Those efforts were successful, though they cost the lives of two brave men who could ill be spared.

But the garrison were not content with standing only on the defensive. They made plucky little night-sorties, which scared the Boers considerably and caused them some loss. Twice Conductor Parsons of the Army Service Corps sallied out alone in the dark, and pitched hand-grenades in amongst the enemy, which produced a perfect panic amongst them. There was vigorous sapping and mining, too, on the part of the Royal Engineers, who made things very lively for the besiegers.

Then the water ran short. A pint a day for each man was all that could be spared ; and this, though supplemented with a pint bottle of ale from the stores, was terribly short rations of drink in the hottest month of an African summer. Plucky Mrs Long found the privation of water for washing more trying than even the thirst ; and her joy was intense when, after many days of this privation, she discovered a big bath-sponge in its oil-cloth case still damp. One daily wipe she and her husband allowed themselves as a luxury, and then locked the sponge up. At last the rain, which for many weary hours they had watched deluging the hills around, condescended to visit them, and then they had rather more water than they wanted ; for, the huts being all roofless since the fire, there was no shelter from the pitiless down-pour. The soldiers, always eager and anxious to protect Mrs Long, rigged up a tarpaulin screen to shield her from the rain when sleeping ; but, despite their care, she often woke up drenched.

The news of the disasters at Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill was, of course, promptly communicated to them by the enemy, accompanied by a

peremptory summons to surrender. But Lieutenant Long, though badly wounded himself, lying helpless, with his faithful wife nursing him night and day, sent back the curt answer, 'I shall hold out to the last.' And the men, looking at that brave woman so patient and cheerful under her terrible load of anxiety, set their teeth hard and swore the Boers should never have Fort Mary whilst there was a man left to handle a rifle.

'And ever on the topmost roof the old banner of England blew.' At first, indeed, it was but a merchant-ship's ensign. How they hoisted a real Union-jack I will let Mrs Long tell in her own words :

'Our ship's ensign had become, what with the wind and what with the bullets, a perfect shred ; moreover, we were anxious to hoist a *real* Union-jack. A Geneva flag was discovered, but though sufficient red and white were forthcoming to complete the crosses, no blue was to be found. Nothing daunted, the men came to me to inquire if I possessed such a thing as a bit of dark blue for the new flag, and, to their delight, I gave them a serge dress of the desired colour. A beautiful Union-jack was very soon made and hoisted, instead of the first. Our ship's ensign, though exchanged, was not discarded, for under its tattered shred our brave fellows were carried to their graves.'

On the 29th of March the Boers kept up a furious cannonade and fusillade all night. But the next morning, to the surprise of the garrison, a white flag was hoisted over the enemy's lines, and under its protection Lieutenant Baker of the 60th Rifles brought them the humiliating news that peace had been concluded with the Boers. So the gallant defenders marched out from the riddled and battered little fort which for eighty-four days they had held against ten times their number.

Mrs Long was so thin and pulled down that her friends in Lydenberg hardly knew her. The Boers cheered her heartily as she passed them on her way into the town, and their commander, Piet Steyne, treated her with the utmost courtesy. Indeed, such a chivalrous gentleman was this gallant Boer that he sentenced one of his men to twenty-five lashes for shouting out during the siege, 'Come out, Mrs Long, and make us some coffee ; we are so cold.' At the same time he threatened double the penalty if any further insult were offered to the English lady.

Lieutenant Long and his men were publicly complimented in a General Order 'for their successful and heroic defence.' But I am disposed to think that the largest share of the praise was due to the brave woman who set them so noble an example.

COUNT PAUL.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



AT this moment there was the sound of a footstep in the passage outside. Cumberlege hastily crossed to the door and threw it open. He found himself confronted on the threshold by Karamoff.

'What now, monsieur?' he began angrily.

Karamoff stopped him with a gesture.

'Don't be a fool, sir,' said he; 'and speak lower. I come to warn you. The members of the council are getting impatient; they exhibit signs of discontent, even rebellion, at their exclusion from the council chamber. It is possible, if time is allowed them for reflection, they may even begin to suspect'—

'What you know!' said Cumberlege grimly.

'Well, monsieur, I intend to save the lady—councillors or no councillors.'

'And I desire to assist you. That's why I offered to bring the chairman's message. It is this: he begs, with all proper respect, to request you to readmit them in five minutes, as time presses. You can read the message as you like. There is also another reason for haste. Count Paul may arrive!'

'Do you think it likely that he will?'

'Not now; but he *might*; and then'—Karamoff shrugged his shoulders significantly. 'My opinion is that he missed the Calais boat, or else has got lost in the fog. Now, *Monsieur Comment t'appelle-t-on*, let me advise you. Get mademoiselle out of this house if possible in half-an-hour, and conduct her with her woman attendant ostensibly to the Hotel Cecil; that is where the Count stays, remember—the Hotel Cecil. A carriage will await you in the street. This done, lose not an instant in transferring her, if you can, to an unknown address, whither the Borastrians cannot trace her, and as speedily as may be smuggling her out of London. Can you do this, monsieur?'

Cumberlege nodded.

'I *will* do it!' he answered.

'You have your plan?' asked Karamoff hurriedly.

'I have, sir.'

'Rely upon me to second you. *À voir*. Five minutes only. Be wary; exhibit neither undue anxiety nor excitement in your demeanour. Our councillors are shrewd fellows;' and with a smile Karamoff closed the door and vanished.

Cumberlege instantly returned to the side of Mdlle. Naritzka, whose pale face and agitated manner sufficiently betrayed the emotion under which her gentle spirit was labouring.

'Mademoiselle,' said Cumberlege, 'as you value your life, I entreat you to be plain with me.

You must pardon what may appear in me a blunt impertinence. Mademoiselle, if Count Paul Rassovitch were here, and if Count Paul Rassovitch, standing before you thus, said, "Mademoiselle, I love you!" what would you reply?'

'I should reply, monsieur,' responded Mdlle. Naritzka, with the prettiest of blushes, 'that I felt honoured by the Count's declaration—no more.'

'No more! Then, mademoiselle, supposing again that the Count should say, "Mademoiselle, you have it in your power to confer upon me the greatest happiness of my life. With all humility I now offer you my name, my heart, and my fortune," what then would you reply?'

'If it were the Count, monsieur—if it were Count Paul Rassovitch who spoke thus, I should reject his offer,' she answered slowly.

'Ah! Is your heart, then, already engaged, mademoiselle?'

'If you have a purpose in the question, monsieur, I will answer it.'

'Believe me, I have a purpose.'

'No, monsieur,' replied Mdlle. Naritzka in hesitating accents.

Cumberlege felt his heart throb strangely.

'Then, mademoiselle, hear me. It is as the betrothed wife of Count Paul that you must escape from the hands of these conspirators. As Count Paul I shall declare to them that you are my affianced bride. Do you follow me, mademoiselle? As Count Paul!'

She bowed her head.

'As Count Paul,' she murmured.

'I shall conduct you, with your woman attendant. Can you trust her?'

'She is faithful to me. Yes.'

'I shall conduct you, then, with her to the Hotel Cecil; presumably to the Hotel Cecil. After that I shall not leave you, mademoiselle, till you are in a place of safety. Then, mademoiselle, no longer as Count Paul, but as a plain and honest English gentleman, you will permit me to lay at your feet a heart that has learnt in the brief space of one hour to love and honour you, and a devotion that asks for its reward no more than a perpetual opportunity of serving you to the end of life? Nay; do not reject them now! Leave me yet an hour or two in which to cheat myself with hopes'—

'Monsieur!' broke in Mdlle. Naritzka, 'how am I to thank you for your brave and disinterested service? As Count Paul'—

'Ay, as Count Paul. Thank me as Count Paul,' interrupted Cumberlege hastily.

'No. I was going to add'—She faltered, hesitated.

Cumberlege seized her hand suddenly and looked into her eyes that drooped beneath his gaze.

'I love you!' he exclaimed hotly. 'I love you; and I will know my answer now! I cannot wait an hour—an instant longer!' Then as suddenly he dropped her hand and bit his lip. 'Forgive me, mademoiselle!' he added. 'It seems as though I would take advantage of your helpless position. Forget the words. Think of me merely as one who plays a part—as, in fact, Count Paul, whom you would not marry!'

'Nay, but as the gentleman who has risked his life to save me,' she murmured; 'not as Count Paul. Perhaps, monsieur, a maiden may be permitted to express her—her gratitude,' she ended shyly.

There was a noise of approaching footsteps and voices nearing the apartment. Mdlle. Naritzka started and turned pale. Again Cumberlege seized her hand and pressed it to his lips.

'Courage,' said he. 'All will be well. One word only, mademoiselle. Zourakoff—there was no ground for that villain's lying assertion—Prince Zourakoff is nothing to you?'

'Nothing!' exclaimed the young lady, flushing. 'Nothing, monsieur!'

'And, mademoiselle, may I hope?'

Cumberlege could only read his answer in the soft blue eyes that looked meltingly into his own, for whatever words were on Mdlle. Naritzka's lips were roughly interrupted by a sudden sharp knock at the door.

'Courage!' he repeated, and turned rapidly to answer the summons. Mdlle. Naritzka sank back into a chair at the farther end of the room. The door opened, and the chairman entered, followed by the councillors.

'I trust, Monsieur le Comte,' said he, 'that we do not disturb you too soon'—he glanced from Cumberlege to the form of the girl cowering in the chair, with a curious expression—'but, as you are aware, each minute is of importance. We desire to terminate the proceedings as soon as possible.'

'Be seated, sir,' said Cumberlege haughtily; 'and you, too, ladies and gentlemen.'

Again the councillors took their places at the table, and Cumberlege proceeded to the head of it. There was a moment's silence; then when each person had settled down in his place he rose to address them.

'Members of the Inner Council,' he began in slow and deliberate tones, 'I am conscious of a great weight of responsibility in the position which I occupy as the Head of our Order. The traditions and principles of that Order are, I need hardly remind you, matters of the deepest import to me. Least of all should I be the one to interfere with the operation of those principles, or seek to divert the course of justice as it is laid down by our laws. In the present case a lady stands before

you charged with a crime against the secret society—a crime, I grant you, for which there would appear to be no palliation and but one punishment. But, fellow-members, there is something connected with this particular crime which at once removes it from the category of unpardonable offences; that something is of a nature so private that I alone am in possession of the knowledge of it. It is impossible for me to make public my information, nor can I tell you how in the first instance I gained it. Aware of the existence of this circumstance, I desired to interrogate Mademoiselle Naritzka privately. The result of that interrogation serves only to confirm what I knew before. Councillors, this lady is no traitress!'

Cumberlege cast a quick, scornful glance round the assembly as he uttered these words. They were greeted by a murmur of astonishment; some of the members looked relieved, others perplexed, and a few evinced signs of anger and distrust—among them Ivan and the chairman.

'Monsieur le Comte,' exclaimed the latter, 'can you not furnish to the council some proof?'

'No, sir,' said Cumberlege coldly. 'I can furnish you no proof. I would not if I could. My word is sufficient; let any dispute it who dare.'

'The Count is right,' cried Karamoff. 'The word of the Head of our Order is law. There is no appeal from the Count's decision.'

'That is so,' grumbled Ivan. 'But surely even the Count is aware that a convicted prisoner'—

'Silence, sir!' thundered Cumberlege in very real anger.

'Rome must come before Cæsar, Monsieur le Comte!' exclaimed the chairman, raising his voice, threateningly, in turn.

This remark seemed to be the signal for a general clamour of protest. Voices were raised on all sides. There appeared to be every indication of a growing uproar. In the temporary hubbub that ensued, and during which Cumberlege stood confronting the assembly with flashing eyes, while Mdlle. Naritzka shrank trembling behind the form of her attendant, Karamoff took occasion to lean forward hurriedly.

'Don't lose your head!' he whispered in English. 'Your plan—it is the only chance now. Be firm and cool. The carriage waits. Remember the Hotel Cecil. Say you will marry her!'

It seemed as though the crafty foreigner had contrived to read Cumberlege's very thoughts, so easily and correctly did he appear to have divined his project and motives.

'Yes, yes,' whispered back Cumberlege; 'that is my plan.' Then in a loud voice he cried:

'Fellow-councillors! Listen.'

Immediately there came a lull; every voice once more was hushed, every eye directed to the figure of the speaker.

'You have said, sir,' proceeded Cumberlege, addressing the chairman, 'that "Rome must come

before Cæsar." The sentiment gains in truth what it lacks in courtesy; and, let me add, it is entirely in accord with my own principles. The laws of the Inner Council shall ever be respected by its Head. I am here neither to discredit nor to violate them. I will, first, repeat what I have already told you: this lady is not a traitress. I have certain knowledge of that fact, but I cannot divulge my information. It is immaterial to me whether you believe my word or not; for it is now on other and more legitimate grounds that I pronounce her instant release. It is well known to you all that by the laws of the Order there is one case in which a member, even if she offend to the last degree, can claim exemption from the penalties of her offence; and that is, if the member be the wife of the Head of the Order. Now, fellow-councillors, although Mademoiselle Naritzka is *not* guilty of the crime of which you accuse her, without stooping to exonerate herself from the unjust charge preferred against her, she is yet able to plead this special prerogative to which I have alluded, and which guarantees her absolute immunity from the consequences of any act she may have committed. Members of the Inner Council, I here declare to you that Mademoiselle Naritzka is my affianced wife.

He paused, and there came again a loud murmur of astonishment from his hearers at the concluding words of his speech. The chairman started up.

'If this is so, Monsieur le Comte,' he exclaimed, 'why were we not informed of it earlier, and spared the trouble of these proceedings?'

'The matter, monsieur,' replied Cumberlege sternly, 'was only settled definitely between Mademoiselle Naritzka and myself ten minutes ago: that is why. Have you anything else to say?'

The chairman shrugged his shoulders.

'The laws of the Order must be respected. You are within your rights, Count,' he answered sullenly. Then he turned to Mdlle. Naritzka.

'Mademoiselle,' said he, 'you are free;' and, 'mademoiselle,' he added, with a curious smile, 'I congratulate you.'

Cumberlege crossed over to the side of the blushing young lady and took her hand in his.

'My countess!' said he, and raised it to his lips.

The members of the assembly received this as the public acknowledgment of the Count's betrothal, and a sudden quick change came over the temper of the company; with one accord they all rose to their feet, and a simultaneous cry burst from their lips of 'The Countess!' In that instant they seemed to have forgotten their recent attitude towards the lovely maiden and their relative positions, remembering only that no longer a culprit, but the chosen and honoured wife of the Head of their Order, stood before them.

'Now, sir,' muttered Karamoff in Cumberlege's ear—'now is the time! The carriage waits!'

Cumberlege needed not to be reminded of the danger of unnecessary delay; while yet the buzz of congratulatory exclamations was in the air, he turned to the woman attendant and bade her instantly repair with mademoiselle's hand-luggage to the hall door, and there await them. Then he addressed himself with a smile to the councillors; all trace of his recent anger and excitement had vanished from his countenance, and it was in a friendly and ingratiating voice that he spoke.

'Yes, my friends,' he said, 'the Countess! And as such let this lady be ever honoured by you as she is honoured by me, and as she deserves to be honoured by all the world—for God never made a truer or a nobler woman! He who disputes this will have to reckon with Count Paul! It is not, you see, in vain,' he added, 'that you summoned me here to-night! If the *dénouement* has proved an unexpected one to you, at any rate allow me to hope that it has proved not a disappointing one. There is an English proverb that says, "All's well that ends well;" and it is Mademoiselle Naritzka's wish that I should convey to you her pardon for the somewhat ungallant treatment she has received at your hands this evening. She is a lady incapable of bearing ill-will even to her enemies; but she needs not your assurance to convince her that among the members of our Order at least, from this moment, she may number only friends.'

Karamoff started to his feet.

'Friends!' he cried. 'Friends all to Mademoiselle Naritzka! Long live the Countess Rasso-vitch!'

The cry was instantly echoed throughout the room: where frowns had been an hour ago were to be seen now only smiles; those who had been ready to condemn were equally ready to applaud; the tide of fortune had turned. Meantime the beautiful recipient of these favours appeared to be as embarrassed by the attentions of her well-wishers as she had been previously dejected by the hostility of her judges. She scarce knew where to direct her eyes so as to escape the admiring glances which were cast upon her from every side. Cumberlege was quick to perceive her distress, and quicker to relieve it. With a simple courtesy he offered her his arm; and, half-shielding her from the scrutiny of the company, indicated with a gesture his desire to conduct her from the room.

'Monsieur,' he said, turning to Karamoff, 'my carriage should be waiting?'

'It is, Monsieur le Comte,' replied Karamoff, bowing.

'Then, my friends,' he continued, addressing the councillors, 'I will detain you here no longer. I find the Hotel Cecil a more comfortable haven than our council chamber; and mademoiselle, you will understand, is fatigued and overwrought'—

'Permit me, Monsieur le Comte—and mademoiselle,' broke in the chairman, 'to express the assurance of every one here that in future it will be our endeavour to erase from the minds of yourself and mademoiselle all recollection of the unfortunate incidents of this evening by the devotion which it will be our chief care to display in the service of Madame la Comtesse!'

Loud acclamations of assent greeted the chairman's words, and, bowing his acknowledgments, Cumberlege, with Mdle. Naritzka's tiny hand resting on his arm, made a step towards the door. It was immediately thrown open by one of the councillors, who, bowing low, held it for the two of them to pass through. The rest of the company rose and stood in respectful silence. Karamoff, beckoning to Bergstein, prepared to follow the gentleman and lady. Once on the landing, he touched Cumberlege's arm.

'Lose not an instant!' he whispered; then aloud: 'I will precede you and see that the carriage is ready, Monsieur le Comte.'

Cumberlege and Mdle. Naritzka stood aside to let Karamoff and Bergstein pass; then they descended the stairs close on their heels, and in the hall below found mademoiselle's waiting-woman equipped and ready. The front door was unbarred by the porter, and in the street outside a brougham stood waiting, wrapped in the mist.

'That is the carriage,' said Karamoff in an undertone. 'The driver was hired by me; he does not know the Count by sight. Give him what orders you will; but first, remember, the Hotel Cecil!' and he glanced significantly towards Bergstein, who had advanced to open the brougham door.

'I thank you for your co-operation, Monsieur Karamoff,' whispered back Cumberlege.

'It is for the sake of mademoiselle,' he answered hurriedly. 'I knew her as a child—and—but no matter, monsieur. God speed you both; and one day we may meet again! Adieu! Adieu, mademoiselle!'

'Adieu—my old friend!' murmured Mdle. Naritzka, and the next moment she was hurried into the carriage by Cumberlege, for it was now no time for ceremony.

The fog had lifted, but was yet thick; and this circumstance perhaps favoured the fugitives, for it protected them from the comments of any passing policeman whose suspicions might have been aroused by this midnight exodus from a silent house. The woman attendant was directed

by Cumberlege to take her place in the brougham, and then he himself entered it and sat down by the side of Mdle. Naritzka, while Bergstein closed the door.

'Inform the councillors, sir,' said Cumberlege to him, 'that I will communicate with them—shortly; and oblige me by telling the coachman to drive with all speed to the Hotel Cecil.'

Bergstein bowed, Karamoff waved his hand, the order was given, and the carriage with its three occupants drove swiftly off into the still night. For some moments none of the three spoke. Mdle. Naritzka covered back in the cushions; Cumberlege sat erect, his brows knitted into anxious thought; and the woman opposite appeared to be sleeping. Presently Cumberlege roused himself from his reflections with the gesture of one who has arrived at a definite conclusion, and his face wore a sudden smile as he bent down close to Mdle. Naritzka's ear.

'Mademoiselle!' he whispered.

The young lady gave a little involuntary shiver, it may have been of maiden apprehension, it may have been of joy—or perhaps a little of both.

'Monsieur,' she replied softly, and seemed to shrink still farther back in her corner.

'Mademoiselle,' repeated Cumberlege in a low tone, 'I think you are now safe. I have only to await your orders. Am I to drive you to the Hotel Cecil, or?'—He paused eloquently, and in the gloom of the carriage his eyes sought out hers. She felt his gaze upon her and trembled, but not with fear.

'Do what you will!' she murmured below her breath.

He bent still lower.

'My answer—now!' he whispered passionately.

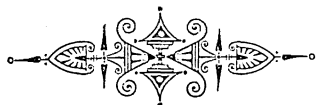
'Your answer, monsieur?'

'For an hour we have acted, but this—this is reality! Not for an hour, but for life, mademoiselle!'

In the darkness a little hand stole out; yet, though it was dark, it was not so dark but that it found itself instantly enclosed in the strong grasp of another and pressed to burning lips. Thus Cumberlege got his answer. A moment later the serving-woman was awakened from her slumber by hearing some one say laughingly:

'Then we will not drive to the Hotel Cecil after all!'

And she was under the impression that it was Count Paul who spoke.



A LADY OF QUALITY IN THE OLDEN TIME.



THE luxury which prevailed at the Court of Queen Elizabeth and her successor, James I., is apt to be underestimated in these days. The notion is prevalent that the state maintained by the ladies of quality in the time of the last Tudor Queen was of a very sordid kind, and it is generally supposed that lavish outlay on dress and appointments only took place on special occasions. The following letter shows what a baroness of the period thought was due to her rank. The document speaks for itself; but a few notes will make the references to personages intelligible.

Sir John Spencer, Knight, was Lord Mayor of London in 1594, and was reckoned one of the wealthiest men of his time. His only daughter and heiress was Eliza Spencer, the writer of the letter. She married William, second Baron Compton, who was created Earl of Northampton in 1618, and was ancestor of the present Marquis of Northampton. The Lord Mayor was colloquially known as 'the rich Spencer' to distinguish him from his relative Sir John Spencer of Althorp, whose daughter, Anne, was the stepmother of Lord Compton, and was afterwards married to the Earl of Dorset. Eliza Spencer brought a large fortune to her husband; much of the land around the Charterhouse belonged to her, and Compton Street and Northampton Street in that quarter preserve her titles.

It will be seen from her letter that she expected a full return for her dowry. The letter is not dated, but from internal evidence it must have been written between 1597 and 1611. The allusion to the Lord Chamberlain is obscure. The writer evidently means Thomas Lord Howard of Walden, afterwards Earl of Suffolk, whose son, Theophilus, bore the title of Lord Walden during his father's lifetime. Lord Howard was not Lord Chamberlain but Lord High Treasurer. The reason of Lady Compton's animosity is explained by an entry in the manuscript 'Memorable Accidents,' written by the famous Parliamentary leader, John Pym, and now preserved among the manuscripts of Mr Philip Pleydell Bouverie: 'A.D. 1611. . . . Sir John Spencer the Alderman died. My Lord Compton havinge maryed his only daughter, oppressed with the greatnes of his sudaine fortunes fell madde. The Erle of Suffolke, havinge begd the keeping of him, would have seized upon his money and jewelles at Islington; my Lord Compton's [step]-mother the Countesse of Dorset, playenge the valiant virago, withstood him, and he was therby defeated; my Lord Compton, being kept in the Towre a little while, recovered.'

It is certain that Lord Compton could not upbraid his wife with extravagance, for he was himself a notable spendthrift. John Pym says further: 'I was credibly informed by his stewarde, Mr P., that my Lorde Compton at the first comminge to his great estate after the death of Sir John Spencer, did within lesse than 8 weekes spende £72,000, most in great horses, rich saddles, and playe.' It is stated that 'on 21st April 1628, the Earl [of Northampton] rode to his installation as Knight of the Garter from Salisbury House, in the Strand, to Windsor Castle, with such splendour and gallantry, and exhibited so brilliant a cortége, being attended by nearly one hundred persons, that a vote of thanks was decreed to him by the Chapter of the Order.' He died on 24th June 1630. These notes will enable the reader to understand this remarkable letter:

'MY SWEETE LIFE,—Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your state, I suppose that it were best for me to bethinke or consider with myself what allowance were meetest for me. For, considering what care I have had of your estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those, which both by the laws of God, nature, and of civil polity, wit, religion, governm^t, and honesty, you, my dear, are bound to, pray and beseech you to grant me £1600 per annum, quarterly to be paid. Also I would (besides that allowance for my apparell) have £600 added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable works; and those things I would not, neither will be, accountable for.

'Also I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I, none borrow but you. Also I would have two gentlewomen, lest one should be sick or have some other lett, also believe that it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their Lord and Lady with a good estate. Also when I ride ahunting or hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending; so for either of these said women I must and *will* have for either of them a horse.

'Also I will have six or eight gentlemen; and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet, to myself, with four very fair horses; and a coach for my women, lined with sweet cloth, one laced with gold, the other with scarlet, and laced with matched lace and silver, with four good horses. Also I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women. Also at any time when I travel, I will be allowed not only carroches [carts] and spare

horses for me and my women; but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all, orderly; not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs with chamber-maids, nor theirs with wash-maids. Also for laundresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before, with the carriages, to see all safe; and the chamber-maids I will have go before, with the greens [rushes for the floors] that the chambers may be ready sweet and clean.

'Also, for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse to attend me, either in city or country. And I must have two footmen. And my desire is that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself, besides my yearly allowance, I would have twenty gowns of apparell; six of them excellent good ones, eight of them for the country, and six others of them *very* excellent good ones. Also I would have, to put in my purse, £2000 and £200; and so for you to pay my debts. Also I would have £6000 to buy me jewells, and £4000 to buy me a pearl chain.

'Now, seeing I am so reasonable unto you, I pray you to find my children apparell and their schooling; and also my servants (men and women) their wages. Also I will have my houses furnished, and all my lodging chambers to be suited with all such furniture as is fit; as beds, stools, chairs, suitable cushions, carpets, silver warming-pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like; so for my drawing-chambers in all houses, I will have them delicately furnished, both with

hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chairs, cushions, and all things thereunto belonging.

'Also my desire is that you would pay all my debts, build Ashby House, and purchase lands; and lend no money (as you love God) to the Lord Chamberlain, who would have all; perhaps your life from you. Remember his son, Lord Walden, what entertainment he gave when you were at the Tilt-yard. If you were dead, he said he would be a husband, a father, a brother, and he said he would marry me. I protest I grieve to see the poor man have so little wit and honesty, to use his friend so vilely. Also he fed me with untruths concerning the Charter-house; but that is the least; he wished me much harm; you know him. God keep you and me from such as he is.

'So now that I have declared to you what I would have, and what that is that I would not have, I pray that when you be an Earl, to allow me £1000 more than I now desire, and double attendance.—Your loving Wife,

ELIZA COMPTON.'

The children of the marriage of Lord Compton and Eliza Spencer were one son and two daughters. The son, Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, was a distinguished Cavalier, and fell at the battle of Hopton Heath in 1642. One daughter was married to Robert Earl of Nithsdale, and another to the first Marquis of Clanricarde. Ashby House, referred to in the letter, is now Castle Ashby, one of the seats of the present Marquis of Northampton.

SOME HISTORIC DIAMONDS.



THE diamond, for a long time considered the most precious of gems, has been known from early antiquity; but, acknowledged as it is on all hands to be supreme in beauty, the manner of its production remains to this day one of the secrets of Nature's laboratory.

Unquestionably, brilliant objects have ever proved wonderfully fascinating to men, and when we reflect on this instinctive taste we cannot be surprised at their fondness for the diamond. But it is to the cutter we are indebted for the revelation of its loveliness and the development of that radiance which distinguishes it from all other gems. In early times the diamond was worn *rough* or polished only on its upper surface, and it was in this form it was used to decorate temples, goblets, crowns, &c. These stones, called *naïfes*, are still infinitely preferred to any others by the natives of India. Any one who may have seen some of the presents received by the Prince

of Wales in the course of his Indian tour will recall to mind how many of the jewels were in an uncut state, and realise what a very different appearance diamonds present when so set from what they do when forming part of some dazzlingly beautiful and glittering ornament such as is worn by ladies of our own time.

Diamonds are of varied hues, and, according to an old writer, 'seem to take pleasure in assuming in turn the colours proper to other gems;' but those considered the most perfect and most esteemed are colourless like water. One of the finest of coloured specimens in Europe is the famous blue 'Hope' diamond. The King of Saxony possesses a magnificent green one, which forms the button of his state hat. But the most perfect collection of coloured diamonds is in the museum at Vienna, and is in the form of a bouquet, the different flowers being composed of diamonds the same colour as the blooms they represent. These stones were collected by one Virgil von Helmreich, a Tyrolese, who had

passed many years in Brazil among the diamond-mines.

From the earliest moment of its discovery it would appear as if the diamond quickened the wits of its possessor and awakened a thirst for gain. Even the poor slaves who worked in the mines occasionally managed to elude the keen vigilance of the overseer, for we are told by Tavernier how, when he was making a tour through the Indian diamond-mines, he saw one poor creature conceal a stone of considerable size by forcing it into the corner of one of his eyes in such a way as to effectually hide it.

Although diamonds have played an important part in modern history, we do not hear of any in ancient times of special note, with the exception of that of Nerva, which he presented to Trajan on recognising him as his colleague, and which the latter afterwards gave to Hadrian as a reward for his services in the Dacian war, thus tacitly appointing him his successor. Diamonds of large size have always been exceedingly rare; and it is from Asia, the cradle of luxury and wealth, that most of those stones which have become famous have been derived.

The crown of England is extremely rich in beautiful diamonds; but the 'Koh-i-nûr,' or 'Mountain of Light,' takes the highest rank as its principal treasure. This wonderful stone, said to have been discovered in the Godavery River five thousand years ago, was the talisman of India for many centuries, and, according to Hindu legend, was worn by Karna, one of the heroes in the 'great war' which forms the subject of the epic poem *Mahabharata*. There is little doubt that it is the same diamond mentioned by the Sultan Baber as having belonged to Ala-ed-din, who ruled over a portion of Hindustan from 1288 to 1301; and it is very generally believed that the 'Koh-i-nûr' was amongst the jewels shown to Tavernier by Aurungzebe in 1665.

After many vicissitudes the 'Koh-i-nûr' found its way into the Lahore treasury, where it remained until the annexation of the Punjab by the British Government in 1849, when it was taken possession of by the civil authorities under the condition that all State property should be confiscated by the East India Company, and that the 'Koh-i-nûr' should be presented to the Queen. It was sent by Lord Dalhousie to England in the charge of two officers, and presented, as stipulated, to the Queen on the 3d of June 1850, and exhibited in the first great Exhibition the following year. Its weight was $186\frac{1}{2}$ carats, but it did not then present its now brilliant appearance. It had been badly cut by the natives in India; and the late Prince Consort, who took great interest in the gem, after due consultation, and acting on the advice of Sir David Brewster, decided that it should be recut. This was accordingly done, at a cost of £8000, the operation being completed

in thirty-eight days; but the result was not entirely satisfactory, Prince Albert openly expressing his disappointment.

The 'Koh-i-nûr' now weighs $106\frac{1}{2}$ carats, having lost eighty carats in the recutting. It is preserved in Windsor Castle, a model of the stone being kept with the regalia in the jewel-room of the Tower, and is valued at £140,000. It is neither the most brilliant nor yet the largest diamond in existence, but the most interesting because of its connection with our own Royal House, and on account of the romantic incidents associated with it.

The 'Braganza,' in the possession of the King of Portugal, is unquestionably the largest diamond of which there is any record. Grave doubts are, however, entertained as to whether the stone is really a diamond or only a white topaz. As it is still in an uncut state, and is jealously guarded in the Portuguese treasury, no one being permitted to examine it, there has never been an opportunity of arriving at a definite conclusion. It weighs 1680 carats, is said to be the size of a hen's egg, and, 'according to the method of calculation by Jeffries,' its value will be, in its present form, £5,644,800. Murray tells us that 'Don John VI. had a hole drilled in it, and wore it round his neck on gala days.'

The discovery of this diamond is generally fixed about the year 1798, and there is a most interesting account of it in Mawe's *Travels in Brazil*, which we cannot do better than give in his own words: 'Three men (elsewhere named Antonio de Sousa, José Felix Gomez, and Thomas de Sousa), having been found guilty of high crimes, were banished into the interior, and ordered not to approach any of the capital towns, or to remain in civilised society, on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Driven by this hard sentence into the most unfrequented part of the country, they endeavoured to explore new mines or new productions, in the hope that, sooner or later, they might have the good fortune to make some important discovery which would obtain a reversal of their own sentence, and enable them to regain their station in society. They wandered about in this neighbourhood, making frequent searches in its various mines, for more than six years. At length they by hazard made some trials in the river Abaité, at a time when its waters were so low that a part of its bed was left exposed. Here, while searching and washing for gold, they had the good fortune to find a diamond nearly an ounce in weight. Elated by this providential discovery, which at first they could scarcely believe to be real, yet hesitating between a dread of the vigorous laws relating to diamonds and a hope of regaining their liberty, they consulted a clergyman, who advised them to trust to the mercy of the State, and accompanied them to Villa Rica, where he procured them access to the governor. They

threw themselves at his feet, and delivered to him the invaluable gem on which their hopes rested, relating all the circumstances connected with it. The Governor, astonished at its magnitude, could not trust the evidence of his senses, but called the officers of the establishment to decide whether it was a diamond, who set the matter beyond all doubt. Being thus by the most strange and unforeseen accident put in the possession of the largest diamond ever found in America, he thought proper to suspend the sentence of the men as a reward for their having delivered it to him. The gem was sent to Rio de Janeiro, from whence a frigate was despatched with it to Lisbon, whither the clergyman was also sent to make the proper representations respecting it. The sovereign confirmed the pardon of the delinquents, and bestowed some preferment on the holy father.'

Another celebrated diamond is one in the possession of the Sultan of Matan, in the island of Borneo. This stone is also uncut and weighs 367 carats. So great is the value its owner attaches to it, and so keen his dread of being deprived of this symbol of royalty, that when strangers desire to see the gem they are shown only a model in crystal. On one occasion, at the beginning of the century, the Governor of Batavia offered in exchange for the diamond the sum of £31,000, two large ships with their full equipment, and a quantity of ammunition; but neither entreaties nor bribes would induce the rajah to part with it. The value of the stone has been estimated at £269,378.

The crown of Russia is at present presumably the richest in diamonds. Besides several valuable collections in the imperial Treasury there are three crowns entirely composed of these stones. That of Ivan Alexiowitch contains 881, that of Peter the Great 847, and that of Catharine II. 2536. One of its most remarkable diamonds is the 'Orloff,' now set in the top of the imperial sceptre, and on this account sometimes called the 'Sceptre' diamond. The history of this stone has been much mixed up with that of the 'Moon of the Mountain,' another great diamond in the possession of the Czar. The most authentic account appears to be that it formed one of the eyes of the Hindu god Sri-Ranga, to whom was dedicated a magnificent temple situated on a fortified island in Mysore. A French deserter from the Indian service, who had been at work in the neighbourhood of this temple, hearing of the idol's *beaux yeux*, determined to become their possessor. As no Christians were permitted within the precincts of the pagoda, he, in order to gain the confidence of the priests, became a devotee, and so ingratiated himself with the Brahmins that they confided to him the guardianship of the inner shrine, which contained the idol. Watching his opportunity, one stormy night he succeeded in forcing one of the eyes out of its socket, and

fled with it to Madras, where he sold the gem to an English sea-captain for £2000, who in turn disposed of it to a Jew for £12,000. From him it was purchased by Khojeh, a Persian merchant, who at Amsterdam, when on his way from England to Russia, met Prince Orloff. This prince, in order to regain the favour of Catharine II., under whose displeasure he had fallen, bought the gem from the merchant for the sum of £90,000 and an annuity of £4000, and presented it to his imperial mistress, who had previously declined the purchase as too costly, but now accepted this truly royal gift from her illustrious subject. The 'Orloff' diamond weighs 194 carats, and its estimated value is £369,800. In size it ranks first amongst European gems, and in beauty yields the palm to the 'Regent' only. It is said that Wilkie Collins's novel *The Moonstone* was suggested by this stone.

But unquestionably the 'Pitt,' or 'Regent,' as it was afterwards called, is the most perfect brilliant in existence, and its history is also very remarkable. It is said to have been found by a slave in the Partaal mines in 1701, who, to retain his treasure, cut a hole in the calf of his leg, in which he concealed it, although it is more probable he secreted it among the bandages. The slave escaped to the coast with his 'find,' where he encountered an English skipper, whom he made his confidant, offering, indeed, to bestow upon him the stone in return for his liberty. The mariner, apparently consenting to the slave's proposal, took him out to sea, and when there drowned him after obtaining possession of the diamond. Disposing of the gem to a diamond merchant for £1000, it is said the man afterwards hanged himself in a fit of remorse. Mr Pitt, Governor of Fort St George, and great-grandfather of the illustrious William Pitt, became the next possessor of this valuable stone, weighing 410 carats, for £20,000. He sent it to London, where he had it very skilfully cut at a cost of £5000, the process occupying two years. Pitt appears to have found his diamond no very enviable possession, for, after refuting the calumnies of his enemies, who had charged him with having obtained it by unfair means, he was so haunted by the fear of being robbed that he never slept two nights consecutively under the same roof, never gave notice of his arrival in or departure from town, and went about mysteriously disguised. He must necessarily have felt greatly relieved when he parted with the diamond to the Duc d'Orleans, regent during the minority of Louis XV., king of France, in 1717, for the sum of £135,000.

With the money so obtained the ex-governor restored the fortunes of his ancient house. After this the 'Regent' became identified with the fortunes of France, and passed through many revolutions and literally through many hands, for, during the Reign of Terror it was carefully

chained and guarded by gendarmes, exposed to the public, and any poor half-starved creature might hold it for a few seconds. At the robbery of the Garde Mobile the 'Regent' was stolen, with the whole of the French regalia; but the hiding-place was revealed by one of the robbers, and it was found buried in the Allée des Veuves. Napoleon I. pledged it to the Dutch Government in order to raise money, of which he was greatly in need, and after its redemption appears to have worn it in the handle of his sword. Barbot tells us it was exhibited amongst the crown jewels at the Paris Exhibition of 1855, and he justly regards it as the most conspicuous gem in the now disused crown of France, which contains eight other diamonds and is by far the richest in the world. In the cutting the 'Regent' was reduced to 136½ carats, and was in 1791 declared to be worth £480,000.

It may here be mentioned that the Brazilian crown diamonds were valued at more than £4,000,000. One of the most important was estimated at £34,800, and adorns the handle of a cane. Brazil also produced the twenty diamonds which compose the twenty buttons of the doublet of ceremony of Joseph I., each valued at £5000.

The superb stone named the 'Star of the South' was found by a poor negress in 1853, who, according to the prevailing custom in Brazil, was granted her freedom as a reward and a pension for life. It was sold by her master for the ridiculously low sum of £3000. This diamond in the rough weighed 254½ carats, but was reduced in the cutting to 125. It became the property of a Parisian syndicate, who sold it to the late Gaikwar of Baroda. It will be remembered this prince was deposed for attempting to kill the British resident, Colonel Phayre, by means of diamond dust.

The 'Pigott' was formerly one of the famous diamonds. We say *was* advisedly for the stone is no longer in existence. It was nevertheless in Lord Pigott's possession when he quitted Madras to visit England in 1775. How he acquired the jewel is not known; but as he acknowledged to having received a few presents 'of a trifling value' from some of the native princes, there is but little doubt that this diamond was among the number. It could scarcely be termed a 'trifle,' as Mawe speaks of it as being worth £40,000; and it is known to have been bought by a young man for £30,000 in a public lottery in 1801, who afterwards resold it at a very low price. In the year 1818 it was in the hands of a firm of City jewellers, Messrs Rundle & Bridge, who eventually sold it to Ali Pasha. With him it met with a tragic end, and Mr R. W. Murray describes the incident as follows, after saying that its owner always wore it in a green silk purse attached to his girdle: 'When Ali Pasha was mortally wounded by Reshid Pasha he immediately retired to his

divan, and desired that his favourite wife, Vasilika, should be poisoned. He then gave the diamond to Captain D'Anglas, with an order that it should be crushed to powder in his presence, which was forthwith obeyed, and the beautiful gem utterly destroyed.' So perished one of the finest of historical diamonds.

The next diamond we will notice is the renowned 'Sancy,' which was bought at Constantinople in the year 1570 by a M. de Sanci, the French ambassador at the Porte, for a large sum. This gentleman appears to have been induced by Henry III. to lend him his diamond, ostensibly for the purpose of raising money upon it. But it does not appear as if Henry ever really parted with the jewel, for the Duc de Sully tells us that he wore, to conceal his baldness, a little turban on his head—his 'toque,' as it was called—which was ornamented in front with a very large diamond. It must afterwards have been returned to its original owner, for De Sanci is again credited with lending it to Henry IV. of Navarre, for the same purpose of raising money, and there is a most romantic story attached to its transmissions. The messenger who had been entrusted with the stone to convey it to the king disappeared, and some time elapsed before it was discovered he had been waylaid, murdered, and presumably robbed. M. de Sanci, who had entire confidence in his servant, and felt convinced he would not lightly give up his charge, caused the forest where the deed was committed to be searched; and the body being found and disembowelled, the diamond came to light, the faithful valet having swallowed it to prevent its falling into the hands of the thieves. Whether this story be true or not, there is a specially interesting document which shows that the stone must have been acquired by the Crown of England some time between the years 1590 and 1600. This is the *Inventory of the Jewels in the Tower of London*, March 22, 1605, in a passage of which the 'Mirror of Great Britain,' a famous crown-jewel, is thus described: 'A great and ryche jewell of golde, called the "Myrror of Greate Brytayne," conteyninge one verie fayre table-diamonde, one verie fayre table-ruby, twoe other lardge diamondes, cut lozengewise, the one of them called the "Stone of the letter H of Scotlande," garnyshed with smalle diamondes, twoe rounde perles, fixed, and *One Faire Diamonde, Cutt in Fawcettes; bought of Sauncey.*' The next mention of the diamond is its presentation by Queen Henrietta Maria, consort of Charles I., to the Earl of Worcester, in return for his valuable services to the House of Stuart; and later, that it was sold about the year 1695 by James II. to Louis XIV. for £25,000. It was lost to the French nation in the robbery of the Garde Mobile at the same time that the 'Regent' disappeared, in September 1792, but was afterwards discovered in the hands of the Monte de Piété,

or State pawning establishment. In 1865 it was purchased by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy of Bombay, but did not remain long in the East, for it was exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1867. It afterwards became the property of the Maharajah of Puttiala, upon whose turban it shone at the Grand Durbar held during the Prince of Wales's tour in India, and now belongs to Mr Astor, whose late wife generally wore it when she attended the Queen's Drawing-Room.

In this brief account of some of the world's most famous diamonds the 'Star of South Africa,' or Dudley diamond, must not be omitted, as its discovery is practically the history of the commencement of diamond-mining in South Africa. We will give the story in Mr Murray's words, taken from his papers in the *Society of Arts Journal*, March 18, 1881. In speaking of Albania—a portion of the Griqua territory—he says: 'One of the colonists who had helped to form the settlement was a Mr Van Niekirk. Mr O'Reilly, who was returning from the interior to Colesberg, called upon Van Niekirk, and remained with him for the night. In the course of the evening one of Van Niekirk's children, a little girl, was playing on the floor with some of the pretty pebbles which are common in the neighbourhood of the Vaal River. Mr O'Reilly's attention was directed to one of the stones which threw out a very strong light, to which Mr O'Reilly's eyes had been unaccustomed. He took it up from the floor and offered to buy it, asking what Van Niekirk would take for it. The simple-minded Boer could not understand what the meaning of purchasing a stone could be, and he said he would take no money for it, but that, if Mr O'Reilly had a mind to take it, he could have it.

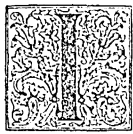
'The colonial trader is generally represented as an individual of a most designing and unscrupulous kind; but there are men amongst them whose fair dealing and high character would stand comparison with that of any men in the world, and no men have a better footing amongst the Boers than the old-established traders. Mr O'Reilly is one of them. He told Van Niekirk that he believed it to be a precious stone, and of value; he would, therefore, not take it for nothing. It was ultimately agreed between them that O'Reilly should take the stone, ascertain its value, and, if found to be a diamond, as O'Reilly suspected it was, that it should be sold, and the money divided between them. Mr O'Reilly took the stone to Colesberg, where he showed it, and he confidently stated to the people he met at the bar of the hotel that it was a diamond. He wrote his

initials on the window-pane and cut a tumbler with the stone, and was laughed at for his alleged foolishness, as many a discoverer had been before him. One of the company took the stone out of O'Reilly's hands and threw it into the street. It was a narrow chance that the stone was found again; and had it not been it is quite a question whether the diamond-fields of South Africa would yet or ever have been discovered in our day. However, the stone was found, and O'Reilly sent it to Grahamstown, to Dr Atherston, to be tested; and the Doctor and Bishop Richards, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Grahamstown (one of the most scientific men in South Africa), both pronounced it to be a diamond of twenty-two and a half carats. From Grahamstown the stone was sent to the then Colonial Secretary, the Honourable Richard Southey, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West, who submitted the stone to the best authorities at hand, and they all decided it to be a diamond. It was then forwarded to the Queen's jewellers, Messrs Hunt & Roskell, who confirmed the decisions obtained in the colony, and valued the stone at £500. . . . This led to a great deal of excitement throughout the country. Small diamonds were brought in by the natives. Then flashed the startling intelligence through the country that a diamond of over eighty-three carats had been discovered. This turned out to be true, and this is how it came about. Mr Van Niekirk, from whom Mr O'Reilly obtained the first stone, hearing that it had turned out to be a diamond, remembered that he had seen one of a similar character in the possession of a native, and set out to find it. A Boer is not long in getting hold of a native when he wants him, and Van Niekirk soon had his man. The native had kept the stone, and Van Niekirk gave him nearly all he possessed for it:—about five hundred sheep, horses, &c.; but, at whatever the price, he obtained the stone, and set off with it to Messrs Lillienfeld Brothers, of Hope Town, merchants of long standing in South Africa, and now represented in Hatton-Garden. They purchased the stone for £11,200, and christened it the "Star of South Africa," forwarded it to England, and it ultimately became the property of the Countess of Dudley, who purchased it of Messrs Hunt & Roskell.' It was reduced in the cutting to forty-six and a half carats.

Many writers had suggested that in all probability diamonds would be discovered in South Africa; but it was not until March 1867 that the first Cape diamond was found; and since then the number of fine stones it has produced has been quite unexampled in the history of diamond-mining.



MEDICAL EXAMINATION FOR LIFE INSURANCE.



T is an awesome business, examination for a life insurance office at the hands of its medical man. Most natures resent personalities. In a drawing-room, among one's own friends, it is embarrassing to be suddenly singled out—divided from the flock—while the self-constituted historian of the party narrates some joke against or some feat favourable to one's reputation. For or against is not the point; it is the isolation that irks.

Small wonder then that—formidable necessity—the medical examiner is often encountered with shrinking. With your wit or enterprise he has nothing to do—not he. You may be the most plausible person in the provinces, but on him your arts will be wasted.

With genial smile and sympathetic manner veiling his keen, cold intellect, he is going to size you up. He intends to find out what sort of people your ancestors were, what your relations are, and, most important of all, what you are yourself.

Like the man who goes round tapping the wheels of a newly arrived train, he is on the lookout for flaws.

'How's your liver?' asked Mr Cattermole of the Rev. Robert Spalding: you will have to answer a lot more questions before Æsculapius lets you go. Not only is he concerned with you then and there as you stand before him, but you must out with your past records, your status moral and social must be glanced over, the performances of your sires go into the balance, and everything has to be properly weighed in order to get a satisfactory answer to the question, 'What is your expectation of life?'

For you who read and I who write are really most complex people. We may inherit all sorts of inconvenient tendencies from our ancestors; and insurance companies are wide awake to the fact that the sins of the fathers are visited upon their children.

Before, then, the doctor focuses his specially developed faculty for research upon the actual person of the would-be policy-holder who has ventured into his sanctum, he concerns himself mainly with two questions which touch his client nearly—family history and personal history.

The usual questions asked under the head of family history relate to consumption, cancer, gout, rheumatism, and insanity. Of these consumption and cancer are the most important.

A history of consumption among one's ancestors must be always an unpleasant thing; but for life insurance purposes it presents varying degrees of significance. We need not go deeply into the question. It is obvious, however, that a man whose father and mother both suffered from con-

sumption would have to run a big risk before he made old bones. If only one of his parents was affected, the other being healthy, his chances of long life would be much greater. And so on. The changes may be rung in several ways. To take just one more instance, suppose that the candidate's mother had died of consumption, and all his brothers and sisters were dead also, then, *ceteris paribus*, his chance of long life would not be so good as that of a man whose mother only had so died, his brothers and sisters still being alive and in fair health.

The reason of this is not far to seek.

Presumably if two healthy people marry, their offspring will be healthy. The children of two delicate parents are most unlikely to be robust. But if a person of sound and robust constitution take unto himself or herself a delicate partner for life, then it remains for the offspring to show how far they for their part are biassed in the direction of health or disease by the healthy or unhealthy parent. Healthy brothers and sisters argues that the nature of the strong parent dominates the children, and *vice versa*.

But there is another element concerned in the calculation of the chances of a candidate with a phthisical family history. This is his age. Contrary to what one would naturally expect, the older he is (of course within limits) the more likely he is to be regarded favourably. Persons under thirty are eyed with suspicion. And for this reason, that consumption is a disease most fatal during the opening years of life. Of such importance is age, that suppose a man, forty, of good physique, with well-developed chest and a good past record, were to present himself for examination, even though both his parents and all his brothers and sisters had died of consumption, he would probably be accepted on his own merits. He would be regarded as an example of the survival of the fittest. And justly so, for the demon of hereditary taint occasionally has pity and lets a favoured few slip through his iron fingers.

A family history of cancer, on the other hand, acquires graver significance with every added year of life; and a candidate of fifty or over, two or more of whose family had died from this cause, would hardly find an enthusiastic reception in insurance circles.

Gout on both sides is a bad thing for the offspring. There can be no question that people suffering from hereditary gout are not really satisfactory lives. Before they are thirty-five the cloven hoof shows itself. They exhibit a general want of tone. Their lives are sluggish, or they catch cold easily, and having caught cold, shake it off with difficulty; their nervous systems may be impressionable, and they become easily overstrung

and easily depressed; or, again, they may suffer from various skin troubles.

But the yoke of hereditary gout is a light one compared with that of consumption or cancer.

Now suppose the happy candidate is able so far to plead not guilty, there still remain two minor items on the charge-sheet of hereditary iniquity. There are the 'breaking-down age' of the family, and its 'liability to catch disease.'

Some families, generation after generation, break down comparatively young. Up to a certain age no fault can be found with them. At fifty-five, maybe, they compare favourably with their contemporaries; but then in a year or two, with startling suddenness, they become worn out. Yet a little while and they die. It is a fine thing to come of a long-lived stock.

The second point is not so important. The fact remains, however, that in particular families there is manifested a remarkable readiness to catch infectious diseases.

In the case of the general public, especially in these days of sanitary law, this could hardly count. But should the applicant be a nurse or a medical man the point deserves notice.

So far we have dealt with those things over which the person himself under consideration has had no control. These are the qualities with which he was endowed from the beginning. Or if we may be allowed to adopt a time-honoured metaphor whereby we poor mortals are likened unto ships sailing over the waters of life, then the particular we who are writing have so far posed as cunning brokers. We have not trusted to outside appearances. A coat of paint hides nothing from our eyes. We required to know a number of things about the vessel we are appraising; and so far we have not done so badly. We have found out from what forests the timber came, be it oak or pine; we know who did the steel and iron work, and what firm put in the machinery. So far so good. If only the vessel has had fair usage we know within a very small margin what we are doing with our money. But has the vessel had fair usage?

That we must find out; and so in plain English we now come to consider the past record of the candidate himself.

How has he fared? Are his timbers threatened with the dry-rot of acquired consumption; has his delicate and originally beautifully adjusted machinery been crippled by gout or rheumatism; or, dread question, has his whole fabric ever, even for a moment, grounded upon the cruel reef of insanity?

Many diseases are unimportant in their nature and transient as to their effects. But these four, consumption, gout, rheumatism, and insanity, leave their mark.

Of course a candidate suffering from consumption at the time of medical examination would

necessarily be rejected. But suppose that in time past he had suffered from it—suppose, say ten years ago, he had lived through an attack of blood-spitting, cough, and loss of flesh, and that since then, for the last ten years, he had been in good health, and there were no active mischief now at the present moment discoverable, and the old damage done was small, then he might be accepted with an increased premium. If he were over thirty-five, age would be in his favour.

Gout has not until lately received the attention it deserves at the hands of insurance societies. Undoubtedly the degenerative tissue changes it threatens to the vital organs of the body handicap gravely the later years of life. A modern authority lays it down as a law, that one single attack of acute and undoubted gout, no matter how slight, should mean an additional three years to the premium.

The results of rheumatism are often disastrous. A German authority on diseases of the heart says that twenty-five per cent. of all cases of rheumatic fever come out of the struggle with a permanently disabled heart. But, granted one attack of acute rheumatism, the chances of another are at hand. If, therefore, a candidate has had one attack, though his heart came off scot-free, the probabilities of another attack are as a very dagger threatening that heart again.

For this reason one marked attack of rheumatic fever, laying the sufferer up for from two to three months, demands an addition of seven years at the age of thirty. With regard to insanity things are not yet so definitely arranged. In all probability a candidate who had once been insane would find it necessary to accept whatever terms any particular office might like to offer.

A recent history of asthma or epilepsy would in all probability lead to rejection; but if some years had elapsed since the last attack, and no mark had been left on the constitution, the life might be accepted with an addition.

But through all this weary list of uncomfortable possibilities our candidate stands firm. He has nothing to do with these things. His hereditary and personal records are without flaw. Then in all probability he is well built and of sound constitution.

Granted good timber went to the making of the ship; granted that she has so far voyaged scatheless, it is almost a foregone conclusion that we shall find her built on the right lines.

So it comes to this, that without even ever having seen any particular candidate, but with a faithful record of these two things—family and personal history—before him, the medical examiner can tell whether or not that candidate is likely to be a robust, well-built man.

For the guidance of examiners, authorities on the subject have fixed certain standards to which healthy candidates should conform.

The following table sets forth what should be the correct weight and chest measurement of a man aged thirty for any height in inches between five feet and six feet one inch :

Height.		Standard Weight.			Circumference of Chest—Medium.
Ft.	In.	St.	Lb.	Lb.	In.
5	0	8	0	= 112	33½
5	1	8	4	= 116	34
5	2	9	0	= 126	35
5	3	9	7	= 133	35½
5	4	9	13	= 139	36
5	5	10	2	= 142	37
5	6	10	5	= 145	37½
5	7	10	8	= 148	38
5	8	11	1	= 155	38½
5	9	11	8	= 162	39
5	10	12	1	= 169	39½
5	11	12	6	= 174	40
6	0	12	10	= 178	40½
6	1	13	0	= 182	41

The weight at any other age may be found with sufficient accuracy by adding or deducting three-fourths of a pound for each year according as the candidate is over or under thirty. It is considered allowable for a candidate to vary fifteen per cent. under or above the standard weight. An increase of even twenty to twenty-five per cent. does not seem to be of importance ; but very heavy people are liable to diseases of the heart, brain, and liver ; and, on the other hand, among very spare people the mortality from wasting diseases is high.

The chest should be of good shape, neither flat nor barrel-shaped ; and with a full inspiration it should expand from one and a half inch to two inches. The chest measurements given in the table are for a medium-sized chest. The tape should go under the shoulder-blades and over the breasts. Of course different types of constitution vary somewhat in build, and for this reason some slight latitude in chest girth may be allowed ; but a good chest should conform in size very nearly to the foregoing table.

As long as the abdomen does not exceed the chest in measurement it calls for no remark ; but a round stomach is anatomically weak.

We will suppose, then, that our candidate is thirty years old, stands five feet nine inches high, weighs eleven stone eight pounds, and is thirty-nine inches round the chest. He is, moreover, a man whose occupation is healthy, lives in the country, and is in easy circumstances. The very sight of him will rejoice the eyes of any medical examiner. Insurance companies will extend to him an exceedingly cordial welcome. And the reason is this : he will in all probability live to be an old man. His height alone is in his favour. Men of moderate height, from five feet six inches to five feet nine inches, are, as a class, more sturdy than their taller brethren. For great height means a long journey to the circulating blood and increased strain on the heart.

A man's occupation, too, is of much moment. Butchers, bakers, plumbers, and men engaged in the sale of alcoholic liquors show a high rate of mortality. On the other hand, clergymen, as a rule, live long lives.

We have endeavoured to show, in a cursory manner, the lines upon which a medical man goes when conducting his examination for medical insurance purposes. And from the above any one can get a rough idea of his chances of being accepted at an ordinary or increased premium.

In most cases, from the doctor's point of view, the point is quickly decided. But circumstances do arise which call for the most careful weighing of pros and cons.

At the risk of wearying our reader let us cite just one instance.

Suppose a candidate to have had a tuberculous history, but at the moment of, and for several years prior to, the examination he has been in fairly good health ; suppose, in short, that in the physician's mind he hovers on the borderland between acceptance at an increased premium and rejection at any price. Then items coming under the head of environment will, in all probability, decide his fate.

Is he married ? What are his means ? What is his occupation ?

Marriage, easy circumstances, and a healthy occupation are favourable to long life. If the doubtful candidate were a farmer and comfortably off, he would run less risk of rejection than if he were a clerk or baker.

In conclusion we wish to express a hope that those of our readers who retire forthwith to their bedrooms in the company of a measuring-tape will find, on reference to the table given above, that their chests come up to the required standard. For this alone is wonderfully reassuring.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE Old Year goes away : her eyes are sad—

The eyes of one who hopes or fears no more.

Snow is upon her hair ; gray mists have clad

A form the vesture of the spring which wore.

The new buds quicken now beneath the clay ;

But not for her—the Old Year goes away.

The New Year enters in : a happy child,

Who looks for flowers to fill her outstretched hand,
And knows not fear although the winds be wild.

Soon shall the birds be singing in the land,
On the young leaves the patter of soft rain,
And violets ope—the New Year comes again.

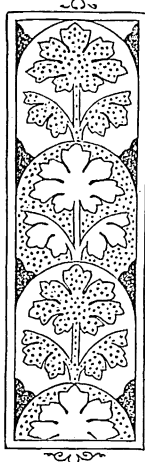
So with this mortal life : now young, now old,

A spring which never dreams of frost and snow,
Summer and autumn—then the tale is told ;

With tired step, in wintry days we go.

God grant a waking on some happier shore,
Where the lost youth and joy come back once more !

MARY GORGES.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SECULAR PROPHECIES.

LIKE a good many other things, prophecies of all sorts are subjected to the 'explaining away' process. They are 'coincidences, deductions—obvious to a thinking mind—from given data, 'lucky shots' wrapped in such ambiguous and mystifying verbiage that they may mean anything. To this last category belong doubtless many of the prophecies attributed to Merlin, to Nostradamus, to Mother Shipton, and others, following the lines laid down in the Sibylline utterances. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that there are prophecies recorded which are quite 'to the purpose—easy things to understand.' Historians tell us that the Emperor Diocletian had his future glory foretold by a Druidess when he was but a simple soldier; one of the same weird sisterhood warned Alexander Severus of his approaching fate. On the day before the Red King met his tragic death in the New Forest, the monk Fulcherd, preaching at Gloucester, used the significant phrase, 'The libertine shall not always rule: the bow of divine vengeance is bent on the reprobate, and the swift arrow is taken from the quiver, ready to wound.' When the Dean and Chapter of Thetford were seeking approval in the *Sortes Biblicæ* for the election of their bishop, the passage indicated was: 'Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.' They recognised the appropriateness of the rede when the profligate Losinga was forced upon them. Losinga, informed perhaps of the ominous occurrence, determined, half in mockery, to test the *Sortes* for himself. The result was even more conclusive. 'Friend, wherefore art thou come?' was the solemn passage that confronted him; and rumour has it that from that day he became a pattern bishop. 'Holy men at their death have good inspiration,' we know on the authority of pretty Nerissa. The epithet scarcely applies to William the Conqueror, that 'stark' man to friend and foe; but it was either an inspiration or paternal insight which made him prophesy

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his third son's future. 'What good is this money to me?' asked the discontented Henry. 'Be patient, my son,' was the prescient reply, 'and thou shalt inherit the fortunes of thy brothers.' Unconsciously, doubtless, the Conqueror was but confirming the still older rune of Merlin, who foretold the reign of Beauclerc. 'After two dragons the Lion of Justice shall come, at whose roaring the Gallic towers and island serpents shall tremble.' If to us of to-day the prophecy does not seem too perspicuous, it is historical fact that his subjects considered it to refer to Henry I.—just as in the next reign but one Eleanor of Aquitaine was identified with Merlin's 'double eagle,' that 'destructive eagle who should rejoice in her third nestling,' her favourite Richard. Mage Merlin, too, was credited with foretelling the birth of Edward of Carnarvon and the devolution of the crown to the Lancastrians.

Peter the Hermit, speaking three days before the Feast, prophesied that before Ascension Day John would have ceased to reign; and within the time named the king had yielded the imperial crown of England to the papal legate. Shakespeare has made us familiar with the prophecy on which Henry IV. relied—namely, that he should die in Jerusalem—and with its fulfilment in his decease in the Jerusalem Chamber; and a goodly list might be made of oracular utterances which in their accomplishment have 'kept the word of promise to the ear and broken it to the sense.' Pope Sylvester received a similar assurance, and he died in a church named after the Holy City in Rome; the Duke of Somerset—this incident, too, is recorded by Shakespeare—had been warned by Jourdain to fear danger 'where castles mounted stand,' and he died at an inn at St Albans whose sign, the Castle, was hung on high. The famous Michael Scot prophesied that Frederick II. would die near the 'iron gates in a town named after Flora.' It was thought that this pointed to Florence, but the emperor died in the castle of Fiorentino, in a room built on the site of an old gate of which the iron stanchions

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still remained. The same famous wizard, it may be mentioned, is said to have foretold the exact manner of his own death—by a blow from a stone received in church; and one day when he was hearing mass a stone ornament from the roof became dislodged, and, falling on his head, killed him on the spot. It is believed to have been in consequence of a vagrant prophecy that Henry V. was so anxious that the birth of his heir should take place anywhere but at Windsor. When he was informed that Catharine had neglected to comply with his request, with the result that her accouchement took place at the inhibited castle, he assumed the mantle of prophecy himself:

I, Henry born at Monmouth,
Shall small time reign and much get;
But Henry of Windsor shall long reign and lose all;

and it must be admitted that the rune was amply fulfilled. Perhaps it was intelligent prescience rather than prophetic afflatus which made this same Henry of Windsor declare of young Henry of Richmond when quite a youth, 'This pretty boy will wear the garland in peace for which we so sinfully contend;' but, if so, it was prescience of a very high order, considering the position of dynastic affairs when the words were spoken.

Then there was the prophecy, which Shakespeare makes 'false, fleeting, perjured Clarence' refer to, that Edward IV.'s issue should be disinherited by some one whose name began with 'G.' The prediction was, as is well known, fulfilled by Richard of Gloucester; though, according to the tragedy, Clarence himself was thought by the king to be pointed at, his Christian name being George. Of Richard Crookback, too, a prophecy is recorded. Before the battle of Bosworth he rode out of Leicester in all the pomp and circumstance of war. As he crossed the bridge his foot struck against a wooden projection. Whereupon a beggar by the wayside was heard to say, 'His head shall strike against that very pile as he returns to-night;' and when the dead body of the vanquished king was brought back to Leicester, flung across the saddle of Rouge Sanglier, the swaying head struck against that piece of wood.

In the reign of Henry VIII., Friar Hopkins prophesied that the king would return with glory from France, but that the king of Scotland, should he cross the border, would never revisit his dominions. A more awesome prediction with regard to Henry is credited to Friar Peyto. In a sermon preached when the king's church spoliation was at its height, the preacher boldly compared the terrible Henry to Ahab, and declared that as it was with the Jewish monarch so should it be with him: the dogs should lick his blood. And it came to pass that when the 'bloat-king' had passed to his account, his coffin rested for a night, unwatched, 'among the broken walls of Sion.' Owing to the rough journey, or

the condition of the body, the coffin had burst, and when the bearers came for it in the morning, beneath the trestles were dogs licking up the blood that had leaked through.

The mention of James of Scotland in connection with Flodden recalls the fact that a more noteworthy seer than Nicholas Hopkins had foretold the disaster. Thomas the Rhymer—True Thomas of Ercildoune—had, more than two hundred years before, seen the banners wave 'by Flodden's high and heathery side,' and an arrow pierce the Scottish king. The Rhymer is said to have foretold, too, the death of Alexander III. by a fall from his horse in 1286, the defeat of the Scots at Pinkie, their victory at Bannockburn, and, more explicitly, as rendered by Sir Walter Scott, that:

A French queen shall bear the son
Shall rule all Britain to the sea;
He of the Bruce's blood shall come
As near as is the ninth degree.

Of that French queen herself, the ill-fated Mary, Queen of Scots, we are told that an equally famous seer foreshadowed her tragic fate. When she was quite a child, her mother, Mary of Guise, took her to the great Nostradamus. 'There is blood on that beautiful brow,' said the sage, and that blood has become one of the most lurid blots on the canvas of history. One of the hapless Mary's most inveterate opponents, John Knox, has also been credited with prophetic inspiration; but his utterances seem prompted rather by shrewd political insight. It was at any rate a daring forecast which he made when imprisoned in Rochelle, that within three years he would be preaching in St Giles's, Edinburgh; and the fact that he foresaw the deaths of Maitland and Kirkaldy, and that he solemnly warned Murray of the fate that awaited him at Linlithgow, goes far to explain his reputation.

Nostradamus, before mentioned, stands high in the ranks of secular prophets, though his predictions are often expressed in so vague a way as to detract somewhat from the certainty of their meaning. He is said to have prophesied the death of the Duc de Montmorency under Louis XI., the deaths of Louis XVI., his queen and dauphin, and the empire of Napoleon. Amongst his most successful inspirations were those relating to the death of Henry II., of our own Charles I., and of the attack on religion at the Revolution. Concerning the first, he wrote:

Le bon jeune le vieux surmontera
En champ bellique par singulier duel,
Dans cage d'or les yeux lui crevera,
Deux plaies une, puis mourir: mort cruelle.

The prophecy concerning Charles I. is contained in the following lines:

Gand et Bruxelles marcheront contre Anvers,
Senat de Londres mettront à mort leur roi;

while that relating to the persecution of the Church is precise even to dates. It was to last

'jusques à l'an mille sept cent nonante deux, que l'on cuidera estre une renovation de siècle.' The French Republic, it will be remembered, dated its ordonnances from the 22d of September 1792. As an example of his vague rhapsodies which have been honoured as prophecies may be instanced the quatrain which was gravely held to predict the blessings the world in general, and Great Britain in particular, were to derive from William of Orange:

Né sous les ombres journée nocturne,
Sera en gloire et souverain bonté:
Fera renaître le sang de l'antique urne,
Et changera en or le siècle d'airain.

The prince was born in a mourning chamber, the 'ancient blood' was renewed by his descent from Charlemagne, and the remainder of the prophecy was common form of adulation. The explanation seems as ingenious as the text.

Mention has been made of the *Sortes Biblicæ*; the *Sortes Virgilianæ* (in which not the Bible but Virgil's poems were opened at random, and a passage selected by pricking the page without choosing) were another sort of impersonal prophet much resorted to. Of the many instances recorded may be mentioned that of their consultation by Charles I. He was at Carisbrooke, and, *pour passer le temps*, Lord Falkland suggested that the ill-starred monarch should consult the Virgilian oracle. The lines indicated were from Dido's curse in the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*. As given in Cowley's translation, the lines are as follows:

By a bold people's stubborn arms oppress,
Forced to forsake the land he once possessed,
Torn from his dearest son, let him in vain
Seek help, and see his friends unjustly slain;
Let him to base, unequal terms submit
In hopes to save his crown, yet lose both it
And life at once; untimely let him die
And on an open stage unburied lie.

Dryden's translation (line 882 *et seq.*) is scarcely as effective; but it may be mentioned that in the last verse 'barren sand' is substituted for 'open stage,' and that this agrees with one of the traditions relating to the obsequies of 'The White King.' The story goes on to say that Lord Falkland, by way of proving the folly of thinking twice of such 'warnings,' himself questioned futurity as interpreted by the pages of the Mantuan Swan. Still more ominous was his venture, for the passage indicated by the interrogant pin was Evander's lament over Pallas:

O Pallas, thou hast failed thy plighted word
To fight with caution, nor to tempt the sword.

I warned thee, but in vain, for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue.

O curst essay of arms! disastrous doom!
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come!

With regard to the former of these incidents, another account makes the prince who thus consulted Virgil the Prince of Wales, then a fugitive in France, and his companion in the harmless necromancy Abraham Cowley, whose rendering of the passage has been given.

To refer at length to instances of these prophetic utterances, or coincidences, would occupy too great a space; a mere mention of some of the most familiar must suffice. A Spanish monk foretold the death of Henri Quatre of France; Coysel predicted that Coligny would be killed by the Duc de Guise, and that before a certain date the Duc de Beaufort would escape from Vincennes, as mentioned in *Vingt Ans Après*. Perhaps one of the most remarkable forecasts or prophecies was that published in the *Mercurius Britannicus* for 1656, which predicted the Fire of London in the very year in which it occurred.

No reference to secular prophecies would be complete which omitted mention of those strange, well-authenticated instances of victims when at the point of death summoning their persecutors to meet them before the divine tribunal within a specified time. Between them Clement V. and Philip IV. procured the condemnation of Molay, the Grandmaster of the Templars, to the stake. As he was led to execution Molay cited his persecutors to appear before God's throne, the king within forty weeks and the Pope within forty days. Within those respective times both died. Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes, condemned to death Fra Moriale. When he had pronounced the sentence the culprit summoned the judge to meet death himself within the month, and within the month Rienzi was assassinated. In 1575 Nanning Koppezoon, a Roman Catholic tortured to death during the religious strife in the Netherlands, recanted his extorted confession when on the way to the scaffold. A clergyman, Jurian Epeszoon, tried to drown his voice by clamorous prayer. The victim summoned him to meet him within three days at the bar of God, and Epeszoon went home to his house and died within that time. While at the stake Wishart openly denounced Cardinal Beaton: 'He shall be brought low, even to the ground, before the trees which have supplied these fagots have shed their leaves.' The trees were but in the bravery of their May foliage when the bleeding body of the cardinal was hung by his murderers over the battlements of St Andrews.

AN ONION CONTEST.

By JAMES BURNLEY.



T was the time of onions, and we smelt them as we passed. Every greengrocery store was piled up with gigantic specimens of the strong-scented esculent which Falstaff so strenuously objected to assuage his hunger with. In the hotels every meal was accompanied by huge dishes of onions, and those 'native and to the manner born' consumed them with a relish that bespoke not only healthy appetites but a decided taste for this most odorous of vegetables.

The time was towards the end of the month of March, the place the city of Pittsburgh, to which metropolis of iron and steel I had wandered in quest of industrial knowledge, in the acquiring of which the good offices of Mr Andrew Carnegie had greatly helped me. But high above the roar of the furnaces, the belching of smoke, and the sound of the mighty hammers as they crushed and moulded the molten metal, there arose the pungent scent of a continuous feast of onions. It was onions, onions, all the way, all the day, and all the night; and the only possible escape from an oniony martyrdom was to become an onion-devourer one's self. This was the refuge I resorted to; and after a time, when the first stages of nausea and revulsion had been surmounted, I succeeded in so permeating my system with the aroma of the onion that I was able to mix with the eager, pushing business crowds without having my organ of smell made unhappy, for with onions as with many other things it is a case of *similia similibus curantur*.

In England, Hodge is the great consumer of onions, along with his bread and cheese, and the noses of the 'quality' turn up in haughty disdain when the scent of the raw onion is in the air; but in Pittsburgh there is no class distinction involved in the consumption of the vegetable; high and low, rich and poor, millionaire and beggar, have the onion craving, and no question of vulgarity arises in connection with it. I freely confess to a liking for the onion in its cooked form, as an aid to its betters—a delicate hint of it introduced amongst more dominant features of the gastronomic art being at once appetising and delicious; and I know that the redoubtable Soyer made much of it, and that it was far from being scorned by Brillat-Savarin; but to be thrown into sudden contact with it in its raw form, to smell millions of it, and to see everybody eating it in its natural state, without any addition or treatment except such as could be obtained from a dip into the salt with every bite, was rather disconcerting, and, as might be expected, frequently drew tears from my eyes.

It was not to be wondered at that in such an atmosphere there should be found men who prided themselves on their prowess as onion-eaters, and that in the season men should come forward to challenge each other in onion-eating. Such a contest took place while I was in Pittsburgh, and it struck me as being so novel—that is, from a British point of view—that I was tempted to make one of the spectators, and now propose to relate how the affair was carried out.

The contest had been arranged a month beforehand, and the contestants, like aspirants for other championships, had employed the interval in training for the meeting. The names of the men were John Raab and John Weidner. The former, when he had time to spare from onion-eating, ran a pair of rolls at Spang & Chalfant's mill; while the latter devoted his days to the hauling of groceries. The function took place at the rooms of the Madison Square Club, in Concord Street, Allegheny, and drew together such a crowd of members and friends as had seldom assembled there. They were mostly residents of the 'Dutch-town' quarter, and showed an enthusiastic interest in the proceedings, both men having a large following of backers. Nor was the company confined to the sterner sex; Hans Breitmann likes to have his wife, his sisters, and his daughters around him even at an onion-eating 'barty'; so the cheery voices of a score or two of *fraus* and *fräuleins* mingled with the harsher tongues of their men-folk, and a very strange babel they made of it. There gathered the Schneiders and the Hartmanns, the Müllers and the Schanbachers, the Grimms and the Zollers, the Minchens and the Muntzers; and altogether it was a very jolly affair. They occupied the earlier portion of the evening, as well as the intervals between the onion-eating rounds later on, with dance and song and joviality, after the manner of their nationality. There was a fair sprinkling of Americans present, too, workers in iron and steel and coal, from whom the grime of toil never seems wholly to depart; and the lager beer was copiously served round to all and sundry. By ten o'clock, the time fixed for the opening of the contest, the assembly was in a swelter of excitement.

I ought to have mentioned that the name of the contestant Raab had been kept a profound secret until the night of the match, and much speculation had been indulged in concerning the identity of the unknown. The competition came about in this way: Weidner had long been regarded as the champion onion-swallower of the club. Indeed, he was popularly supposed to stand unequalled in the art. John came of a family of

onion-eaters. His father and mother had been famous for their capacity in that line, so John had been inured to onion-eating from his youth up, and every night before going to bed ate from three to half-a-dozen to assist his slumbers. If he awoke in the night he would get up and despatch a few more onions, which he always kept by his bedside ready for emergencies. With a reputation like this, it seemed a reproach to Weidner's friends and neighbours that an opportunity should not be created for him to give some public demonstration of his special ability. Accordingly, one night at the club, Weidner's friend, John Metz, a patrol-wagon man, made the bold announcement that he would back Weidner to eat onions against any man in the world. To this challenge one Amos Lang, a detective in the police force, made answer that he would produce 'an unknown' who would 'eat onions all around Weidner.' Whereupon a match was made for twenty dollars a side, and betting became very free, considerably over two hundred dollars being wagered on each side.

The contest took place in a large room on the second floor of the club-house. There was a piano in one corner, and on the walls hung coloured lithographic portraits of the Emperor William, Bismarck, Goethe, Von Moltke, and Mr. McKinley. In the centre of the room was a round table, by the side of which stood a number of empty chairs. The remaining space was occupied by the exciting, gabbling, smoking, drinking, onion-scented crowd of expectant sight-seers.

A tremendous cheer went up when the clock struck ten and in marched the judges and the referee, followed a minute or two afterwards by Weidner and his backers. Then there was a short lull. All looked for the coming of 'the unknown,' and wondered who it could be. When at last John Raab and his supporters came striding into the room there was a great commotion, for Raab turned out to be almost as well known as his rival, though few perhaps had suspected him of any special gift in the way of onion-eating—yet it transpired later that Raab had been raised on an onion-farm and had lived among onions for years. Weidner took his seat on one side of the table, Raab taking the chair immediately opposite. The judges and the referee also sat facing each other. On a side-table was a pile of onions beside a pair of scales, presided over by a beery German, who seemed proud of the honour of having to weigh out the allotted portions of onions to the contestants.

Weidner and Raab were ready. Weidner, a rosy-cheeked, plump, smiling fellow of about thirty-five, looked round with an easy confidence; while Raab, a hungry-looking, ferret-eyed, slim man, a few years older, seemed perturbed of conscience and ill at ease, for a reason that was soon apparent. The onions—which were of the

big red variety, the strongest kind known—had been divested of their outer skins, and weighed out, two pounds to each man, and placed in front of Raab and Weidner, when a shrill, clarion-like voice sounded a wild, protesting note from the far end of the room. John Raab's pale face turned paler. He recognised the voice of his wife, and for a moment it appeared as if the contest would not be able to proceed. She forced her way to the table, and angrily insisted on her husband 'quitting;' but in spite of her threats and denunciations he clung to his post, and eventually the irascible lady was persuaded to leave the room, and she refused to return, doubtless much to Raab's comfort. His mother-in-law stuck to him, however, as mothers-in-law sometimes will, and did all she could to compensate for her daughter's opposition, by cheering vociferously every time Raab crunched his teeth into a fresh onion.

Weidner's pile comprised nine onions, Raab's eight. The senior judge read out the rules of the contest before the eating began. The onions were to be eaten raw; the men were permitted to eat with salt or without, as they pleased; and they were at liberty to consume as much beer and rye bread as they desired while they went along. A sliced loaf and enough salt to have pickled a pig were placed within easy reach of the principals, and Raab ordered two glasses of lager and Weidner one.

All was now in order for the start, and time was called. The giggling of the women was suspended, and the men held their breaths. The contest was to be in rounds of ten minutes each, with five minutes rest between. Each man seized an onion, and the battle was on. Weidner cut his onions in quarters with a knife, and dipped them in salt. Raab smashed his with a blow of the fist, and also helped himself freely to salt. The greatest excitement prevailed, and there was a good deal of betting, the odds being five to four on Weidner all through the first round. Weidner ate slowly but steadily, while Raab attacked his onions as though they were his natural fodder. The round ended with honours even, each man having disposed of four onions. The men spent the five minutes' interval out of the room.

When time was called for the second round, Raab entered with two glasses of beer in his hands, and Weidner with one—and they got to work again, but by no means with their original avidity. Raab was the fresher of the two, and, perceiving signs of weakening in his opponent, began to chaff him, boasting that he could easily eat two onions to Weidner's one—a remark that drew forth a frantic cheer of approval from Raab's mother-in-law. But Raab himself was much slower than in the initial round, and both showed a greater desire for 'extras' than at the outset. Raab fortified himself with a whole loaf of bread

and four glasses of beer during this round, but Weidner contented himself with a loaf of rye and one glass of lager only. The referee drank more than both the contestants put together, but then he wasn't eating onions. At the end of the round Raab had four onions left, and Weidner three and a half; but the latter's onions were larger than his rival's.

When time was called for the third round Raab was outside drinking a few more beers, and did not show up promptly, whereat Weidner's friends were for claiming the victory for their man on the ground of the other's default; but the referee reminded them that the match was for the man who could eat the most onions, and declared that Weidner must remain and eat more than Raab had eaten before the award could be given to him. At this Weidner started on to get a safe lead, but before he had taken a couple of bites Raab came in with a couple of glasses of beer in his hands. Both men now ate rapidly for a short time, but Weidner showed signs of decided 'grogginess.' Raab chuckled. 'They wanted an unknown,' he said; 'well, they have got one.' Towards the end of the round both men were in distress, and handled their onions in anything but an affectionate manner. Weidner was scarcely able to swallow, and Raab, who had put away

seven glasses of beer during the round, found his teeth hesitating and uncertain.

When the fourth round was called Weidner failed to come up; but Raab, who had probably indulged in copious libations during the five minutes' interval, sat down as if his second appetite had come to him, and avowed himself ready to tackle a whole year's crop of onions. Weidner's friends then came forward and announced that their man had thrown up the sponge, and Raab was awarded the prize of victory amid much cheering, his devoted mother-in-law honouring him with a gushing embrace. Raab had eaten twenty-four ounces of onions to his rival's twenty-two ounces. Weidner was disconsolate; the humiliation of defeat weighed heavily upon him, and he almost wept as he declared that it was the first time in his life that his stomach had gone back on him.

As I took my departure the girls were preparing for further revelries. The piano was set tinkling, and the last sounds I heard were those of uproarious laughter and the shuffling of many feet. The *fräuleins* had entered into the spirit of the contest so thoroughly that they were arranging an eating-match on their own account before I left, with bananas, instead of onions, as the commodities to be devoured.

QUAINT SOUTH AFRICAN CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

By LEWIS GOLDING.



As we become more enlightened, that peculiar tendency inherent in every one of us—no matter what may be our creed, nationality, age, or sex—towards a belief in supernatural agency grows less assertive and apparent. Still, with all our boasted knowledge, we cannot entirely extinguish the spark of superstition, though we may deny its existence and endeavour to conceal its presence from each other. For instance, even to-day many people could not walk through a deserted graveyard without experiencing that indefinable feeling of physical and mental discomfort colloquially termed 'goose-flesh.' Others, again, can never sit down to table with twelve companions without dreading the consequences, or at least without endeavouring to restore their own peace of mind by maintaining that they disbelieve in thirteen being an unlucky number.

If, then, we, the descendants of generations of cultured and enlightened ancestors, still retain some small instinctive horror of things occult, is it to be wondered at that savages of all nations, grovelling in the depths of ignorance and superstition, descend at times to the perpetra-

tion of any brutality, any absurdity, in order to ward off the possible fatal results of a glance from the 'evil eye,' or in an attempt at propitiating offended spirits—malignant or otherwise?

The South African native, in particular, is a strangely superstitious individual. Anything unusual or out of the ordinary course of events is considered by him to be the precursor of some grievous calamity; and such phenomena as an eclipse of sun or moon are viewed with the utmost consternation and awe. In brief, everything that is inexplicable to him is at once termed *tagati*—that is, witchcraft—and attributed to the handiwork of some powerful but malicious 'medicine-man.'

Quite recently a native woman was arrested in Matabeleland by the white authorities on the grave charge of infanticide. At her trial, a day or two later, she was asked to state her motive for so inhumanly murdering her offspring. Without hesitation she replied that she had 'put away' her child because it was a monstrosity, and, as such, unfit to cumber the earth. When pressed for an explanation showing in what way the child was a freak of nature, the woman said.

that, contrary to *native* infantile teething-law—she knew nothing of the European—the child had cut the two milk-teeth in the upper jaw first: proof positive that the infant was accursed. It was only the woman's palpable ignorance that saved her from the undesirable attentions of the local 'Monsieur de Paris;' but the long term of penal servitude which the unfortunate woman is now undergoing will doubtless teach her and her friends that the white rulers of the country do not countenance the indiscriminate slaughter of little children, no matter how malformed they may be or how unusual were the circumstances attending their advent into the world.

For generations past the birth of twins has been regarded by Zulu women as a most grievous and regrettable calamity. Doubtless many European nations will contend that the unsophisticated native women are by no means unique in this respect. True; but the reasons for a display of disgust at a 'double event' are in each case owing to a very different cause—the European mother only taking into account the extra care and attention entailed; while the native, attaching no importance whatsoever to this matter, is only overcome and terrorised by the possible punishment which will be inflicted upon her for having so flagrantly insulted and offended some mysterious power by giving birth to two. With the Zulus the belief is that the husband will die or otherwise suffer should both children live; and to obviate this difficulty it was customary, and still is in the remoter and less civilised districts, to suffocate the weaker of the twain—in the case of male and female, the former—before it had well commenced to live. Thanks, however, to a rigorous enforcement of the law in all cases where infanticide can be proved, this ghastly custom has now almost been stamped out; but habits and beliefs, whether amongst us or savages, die hard.

Previous to making war, most South African natives and tribes issue instructions to their head 'medicine-man' to ascertain, by means of his supposed supernatural powers, whether or not the occasion is for them an auspicious one. The methods adopted by the witch-doctors to learn this vary, of course, in accordance with the customs and beliefs of the different tribes concerned, though, at the same time, a great family resemblance is recognisable in all such mystic and barbaric rites. It has been stated that, in regard to the recent outbreak of hostilities between the British and Boers, the Basutos—the hereditary foes of the Boers—acting up to their usual custom, consulted the fates as to the result. Before relating how this was done it is necessary to state that among the natives a red-skinned ox always represents the British, a white the Boers, while a black animal, as is natural, is the accepted symbol of all native races. Accordingly, a red and a

white bullock were caught and simultaneously flayed alive; and whilst incantations were being muttered by the 'medicine-men,' a huge concourse of people carefully watched the devoted animals as they writhed and groaned in their agony. It so chanced that the white-skinned ox outlived, by some few moments, its fellow-martyr; in consequence of which, forsooth! the Basutos maintain that the Boers will eventually prove the victors; and, being convinced on this point, these people have at present decided to preserve a strict neutrality, notwithstanding their intense hatred of the Boers, rather than fight on the losing side.

Could anything better illustrate the credulity and rank superstition of these natives than the above-narrated incident, particularly as they quite admit the fact that such a golden opportunity of wiping out old scores will in all probability never again occur? On the other hand, the Dutch must hail with unadulterated joy this determination of their old-time foes to remain inactive, well knowing from past experience what cruel, stubborn, and unrelenting antagonists the inhabitants of mountainous Basutoland make. But, for all this, it would be exceedingly impolitic of either camp to rest assured of the absolute neutrality of the Basutos; for who knows but that the native *savants* may institute fresh inquiries and discover that they have made a mistake as to who are to be the ultimate victors?

Let us now turn to something less gruesome and revolting. In common with the people of almost every uncivilised race the world over, the South African natives look upon lunatics and simpletons—no matter what their creed, colour, or nationality—with reverential awe, and would no more dream of intentionally maltreating or injuring such than they would of hurting a little child. This instinctive abhorrence of wounding a fellow-being more or less incapable of self-defence is ascribable to the deep-rooted belief that all such irresponsible individuals are in close contact with and under the direct protection of the Great Spirit. But with all their reverence for the village idiot, they seldom are able to refrain from perpetrating an occasional practical joke on the poor fellow. Great care is, however, exercised to avoid injuring the subject of their fun, as the following little episode, witnessed in Natal by the writer, will show:

A crowd of appreciative Kaffirs were one day viewing the ludicrous antics and gesticulations of a very ragged and very dirty native idiot, who, as soon as he had attracted sufficient attention, went on to graphically describe his many brave deeds in battle, hinted at his vast knowledge in witchcraft, and generally drew on his powers of imagination for the amusement and instruction of his dusky audience. At length one of the bystanders, growing impatient and eager for greater

excitement, surreptitiously struck from the woolly pate of the poor half-witted creature the battered old silk hat which he was proudly wearing. A yell of applause greeted this development of the proceedings; while the hat was picked up, carefully brushed, and politely returned to the owner by one of the laughing Kaffirs. With a glance full of contempt and indignation, the unfortunate butt again donned his hat, but only to find that before it had been two seconds on his head it was again describing a parabola through the air. Time and again the hat was knocked off, but each time graciously returned by a spectator. At last, however, the poor owner of the topper, turning sharply, managed to catch one of his tormentors *in flagrante delicto*. With a quick grab he laid hold of the Kaffir's arm, and then set about administering a sound thrashing to the culprit with the flexible *sjambok* he held in his hand. The native took his flagellation stoically, and never once attempted to retaliate, nor even appealed to the onlookers for assistance; perhaps, indeed, he knew that it would be futile so to do. At the conclusion of the thrashing the recipient remarked, as he lugubriously rubbed his aching limbs, that though there might be some grounds for doubt as to the mental balance of the proprietor of the tall hat, he personally entertained none whatsoever respecting the perfect development of his friend's biceps!

In common with many of otherwise widely divergent opinions, the Zulus to some extent believe in the transmigration of spirits, owing to which they refuse to slay any snake, no matter how venomous, that may have wandered into the precincts of their places of abode. Such intruders are invariably accorded the greatest respect, being looked upon as deceased relatives, in the shape of serpents, harmlessly revisiting the scene of their one-time human form. But these same natives have not the slightest compunction in summarily putting to death any reptiles they may meet with at a distance from human habitations, such not being regarded in the light of possible brothers or sisters, fathers or mothers.

Apropos of snakes, it might be mentioned that Kaffirs affirm that no serpent can die, even though it be beheaded or beaten into a pulp, before the setting of the sun. This peculiar belief is shared by many Boers, while even some of the more superstitiously inclined British colonists also give it credence. Doubtless the muscular contractions of the reptile after death are responsible in a great measure for the prevalence of this idiotic belief, and in the case of ignorant Kaffirs it can be condoned; but that intelligent Europeans should credit any animal with such a miraculous tenacity of life is almost past understanding.

The Zulu custom of disembowelling fallen foes is now pretty generally known. Few are aware,

however, that such mutilation is not practised on account of innate cruelty, but in order to liberate the spirits of the deceased warriors. It is maintained that if the slayer inadvertently omit to perform this last act of charity he will be haunted and eventually driven into his grave by the insulted ghost of his victim.

The following is a quaint custom: After a battle all the surviving warriors are carefully dosed with *muti* (medicine) brewed from herbs by the witch-doctors of the tribe. This is to purify and fortify them against any sinister designs on their welfare that may be entertained by the spirits of their slain enemies.

A pleasing feature in the character of the Zulu is his generosity and willingness to share with his immediate friends and companions any of the good things of life that may happen to come his way. Frequently the writer, in order to test the dispositions of various natives, has purposely chosen one Kaffir out of a number, and, without permitting the remainder to observe, has presented the favoured individual with some article of confectionery, such as a piece of cake, a few chocolates, or a handful of biscuits. Never once, however, has he noticed a Kaffir secrete his treasures from his comrades, although every opportunity for so doing was given. No; the recipient, in every case, after profuse expressions of thanks, invariably shared whatever edibles he had obtained equally with all his companions, in many cases leaving the merest 'bite' for his own delectation.

But this excellent principle of share and share alike is sometimes extended beyond its proper limits, and often sadly overdone, as housekeepers in the colonies know to their cost. Unless all eatables are kept under lock and key, a mistress soon discovers that her particular kitchen Kaffir is regaling all his chums and relations with the best the house provides; and when accused of giving away what does not belong to him, he does not seem to think he has been guilty of any very serious misdemeanour. In fact, he feels aggrieved at exception having been taken to so minute a detail. It must be borne in mind that it is only where *skoff*, as all food is called by the natives, is concerned that he is unable to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*; otherwise he is, as a rule, honesty personified.

One word in conclusion. Many people seem to think that the Zulus have no religious belief whatsoever. This is a mistake, for there is no doubt that some form of a future state is implicitly believed in, although the natives do not themselves appear very clear about the matter. Nevertheless, the existence of a Good and an Evil Spirit is acknowledged by every one of these merry, good-natured, and intelligent members of the human family.

THE PARSON'S LETTER-BAG.



TIME—a winter evening; place—a village schoolroom; occasion—a lecture by a clerical friend on the General Post-Office and its working. At the close I was, of course, able to move the usual 'heartly vote of thanks,' for he had given a really interesting sketch of a great national institution. But I fear I did not quite follow him in his warm praises of Rowland Hill and the incalculable benefits which the Post-Office confers upon us all; for there are moments when the contents of my letter-bag demand all my patience, and make me just a shade sceptical of the commonly received doctrine. What with general directories, local directories, and clerical directories, it is so easy to find me out, and so many people think it worth their while to, that I feel myself almost persecuted by the unfailing attentions of the post-man; and there are even times when familiarity with his ministrations tends to produce its well-known result. In some of these matters, no doubt, I am only a sufferer in common with most of my fellow-men; others are the special privilege of clerics.

First, then, come the prospectuses; and they do come, plenty of them. The benevolence of all manner of titled and dignified capitalists is simply astonishing; and the wealth they are anxious to pour into my lap is fabulous—perhaps in more senses than one. Only they one and all begin by wanting some of my money in the first place! Sometimes it sounds very like, 'Just to show your confidence, you know.' But my confidence has had some very cruel shocks; and many of these fascinating documents now go to their doom unopened. It might have been better for me had they all done so.

Then follow the circulars on every conceivable subject, as it seems to me, that is capable of being advertised or recommended. Most wonderful tea and cocoa, with occasionally a sample enclosed that I may make trial of its merits, and sometimes reduced terms if I will purchase largely. Patent medicines with marvellous powers and infallible efficacy; and here also a sample is kindly provided! Why will people foolishly persist in dying when they can be cured so certainly and so cheaply of almost 'all the ills that flesh is heir to'? But more pleasant topics are touched on, and in the most persuasive manner. Beautiful bells, handsome organs—especially American organs—and fine clocks with mechanical chimes, all appeal to my imagination and tantalise my poverty. Various enterprising tailors, too, are very anxious to adorn my outer man, about which I admit I am deplorably careless; their suggestions as to what is most correct and becoming in clerical attire have almost a touch of rebuke or satire in

them—for me. But some of these gentlemen evidently have large faith in human nature, for they send me 'instructions for self-measurement.' Now, if 'the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client,' what will be the condition of the country parson wearing a suit for which he has *measured himself*? Had he not almost better go with Gulliver to Laputa, and be fitted with a coat by the aid of quadrant and sextant? I am not too particular about my millinery—far from it, my wife says; but it certainly would require more courage than I possess to go about in garments for the fit, or misfit, of which I was personally responsible! Not to be able to grumble at one's tailor! No; 'the line must really be drawn somewhere.'

The number of coal-merchants and coal-agents who compete for my custom is embarrassing. How can they all manage to get a living? Or do they accomplish the feat? The drapers, too, favour me with most elaborate lists and captivating illustrated appeals; sometimes even with patterns of fabrics which I do not in the least understand, but which I must assume to be very admirable and excellent, or of course these worthy men would not say so. I used to turn over all such documents at once to the *placens uxor*; but I regret to say that this led to so many appeals, and such pitiful statements about 'nothing to wear,' that I have quietly discontinued the practice. The wine-merchants also take a friendly interest in my table and my health. There are various palatable and nourishing wines which, if I will only drink them, will counteract the strain and pressure of clerical life, will strengthen my nerves, and preserve my digestion unimpaired to a healthy and vigorous old age. Then there is wine for sacred uses—the *only* wine that should ever be so employed, according to my advisers. And the last of the circulars on this subject has a somewhat authoritative tone; it presents to my notice an unfermented and non-intoxicating wine for sacred purposes, and gives me to understand that the gravest responsibilities will attach to any disregard of this intimation.

I am invited to furnish my modest dwelling as completely and elegantly as I please, and on the most reasonable terms; several firms or companies are anxious to do this for me, and each of them, it seems, will do it more reasonably and expeditiously than the others. I and my belongings can be removed anywhere at the shortest notice—also by a variety of agencies. Nor does the vigilant care of some of these unknown friends cease even with life. Some years ago the blinds were drawn down in my house for several days, and during this time there arrived a variety of sketches and prices of stone memorials

to mark the final resting-place. But the *ne plus ultra* of advertising must surely have been reached when I received an extremely neat note, very well written on tinted paper in a rather elegant feminine hand, and strongly perfumed, to inform me that Mr Blank, a neighbouring tradesman, had 'a regular supply of excellent sausages from the country three times a week,' and respectfully solicited my custom.

These various communications have one point in their favour, and to a busy man it is a very strong one—you need not answer them; and in many cases you will certainly be better off if you don't. But those long envelopes with official seals and inscriptions—they are quite of another order, and cannot be played with by any means. Some demand returns; others are from various commissioners, or from 'My Lords' who so kindly interest themselves in education, or from their various deputies; but as to the purport of all this somewhat elaborate and laborious correspondence, discretion counsels complete silence. Still one may say, without violating confidence, that it often adds a fair and sometimes a heavy item to the day's work.

Then come the appeals for help or charity. What *do* these good people take me for? Cræsus, Midas, and Mæcenæ, or, to come to later times, Peabody, Astor, and Rothschild—all rolled into one, surely—to judge from the number and urgency of their requests. Will I subscribe to this, that, and the other—to all the societies, funds, and associations under the sun, as I am sometimes tempted to put it to myself? Now, the value of my living is not an entire secret, nor is it one of the great 'prizes' of my profession; but perhaps I am credited with large private means; at any rate I am assumed to be generous; but this does not in the least help me to find the money. But if I cannot give, perhaps I can help in other ways. Will I make collections on Sundays, or hold a meeting during the week, or both? Or will I allow the eloquent and energetic secretary to come and do these things for me, supporting the movement by my own presence and personal influence? My dear people, there are only fifty-two Sundays in the year, as a rule; and of these, local objects and certain universally accepted claims have already bespoken a good share. Then we *must* have a certain number for our own work; and of those that remain, one can hardly help saying, 'What are they among so many?'

Private begging letters also come into the same class; and I am free to confess that, after many years' experience, I am still sometimes perplexed to distinguish genuine appeals from those of impostors. What tales of sorrow and want, struggles and suffering, some of these letters unfold! It is very hard to refuse; but if, on the other hand, you give at all freely, how quickly this is discovered, and you simply become a target

for every scoundrel to take a shot at. But when you cannot give, you are not allowed to forget that you have 'influence.' Your 'vote and interest,' at least, are requested. Will you help to get an orphan into an asylum? Yes, indeed, most gladly if possible. Only there are nineteen vacancies and seventy-six orphans; and, as you read the successive appeals, each one seems more deserving and distressing than the last. What is to be done—draw lots or take the first that applied? You finally make a selection, and send off your vote with a secret conviction that you are a very cruel man, having in effect said 'No' to a host of piteous appeals. Moreover, you have offended, or at least disappointed, the patrons of many of the other candidates, who are sure to think 'you certainly might have helped their case.'

You are also in great request for testimonials and certificates. Every one who has served with or under you, in any capacity, claims the right to your recommendation, at almost any distance of time, and with a view to any and every kind of employment. 'You knew me at —,' or, 'We were together at —,' is an unanswerable argument. And sometimes people whom you do not know at all, but whose *friends* knew *you*, still request help of this kind. Former servants, too, want characters, even if, like the legendary Irishman, they would probably 'do better without one.' Various good people, more or less qualified, have established schools, and wish to refer parents of possible pupils to you; these requests are sometimes very embarrassing. Certificates from registers you of course expect to furnish as required; but occasionally you are invited to a sort of 'general search,' with very incomplete data to guide you.

Miscellaneous correspondence 'crowns the edifice.' Some remarks of yours in a recent sermon require to be explained, and perhaps vindicated. Another discourse has been much appreciated, and the loan of the manuscript, or some notes, would greatly oblige. Can you recommend a book which will dispose of all sorts of religious difficulties, and reply to the latest attacks upon the faith? Or, better still, can you give your correspondent a summary of the defence, stated in your own clear and pointed way? Why do you not preach oftener on some given subject in which many good people are just now greatly interested? Can you not give a course of lectures, dealing thoroughly with—&c. Will you please to avoid special subjects entirely, and always deal with wider aspects of truth possessing general interest? Will you publish a given sermon? By this, as experience may have taught you, you will probably lose a little money, and may also bring the critics down upon you.

Having duly attended to these various claims, I may now turn to my own private correspondence. I have still some friends left, thank Heaven; but I hope they do not measure my

affection by the number and length of my letters, or I shall soon count them on my fingers, and not require all of those. My children, bless them! like to hear from me, and are goodness itself in excusing the rarity of their letters from home. Births, marriages, and deaths in the circle of my acquaintance call from time to time for letters which must not, especially from me, be too brief and formal. Letters of advice, and sometimes letters asking for it, must also be written. At times one has to endeavour to relieve religious melancholy, to minister to the mind diseased, and I have had some letters the writer of which was evidently insane. Anonymous letters are, happily, few and far between. Should they appear to be taking a malignant or scurrilous turn, the waste-paper basket is handy, and large; better still, perhaps, the study fire.

My readers may rest satisfied that among the penalties of an official position, even if humble, is a correspondence the extent, variety, and pressing character of which are often very imperfectly

realised, and constitute a heavy addition to the responsibilities of life. A wild thought has sometimes crossed my mind—to pocket a clean collar and a tooth-brush, grasp my trusty umbrella, and, having seen that something still remained in my purse, start off for a walk that should last a week; staying at country inns, and sending home post-cards to prevent anxiety as to my welfare, with the strictest injunctions that no letters should be sent after me. Visions of breezy downs, green woodlands, shady lanes, rippling streams, wild flowers, and music of the birds float before me as I plod away at my desk. A week without letters—it is 'too good to be true!' Then comes the second thought—prudent, necessary, but rather dismal—what a stack I should find on my table awaiting my return! However should I fetch up the arrears? For it is among the peculiar experiences of life—with me, at any rate—that the attempt to take even a short holiday seems to galvanise my correspondents into a most troublesome activity.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

COAST-LINE PROTECTION.



It is well known that in many places round our coasts the sea is constantly nibbling away at the land, encroaching in some places at such a rate that in the memory of living persons wide reaches of land have altogether disappeared. On rocky coasts the action is so imperceptible that it may be neglected; but where the soil is friable, the constant attack of the sea is a matter of serious moment to land-owners and occupiers in the vicinity. At present there is no authority to take note of impending danger from this cause; and as a rule no expert advice is sought until a building is in actual jeopardy or a tract of land has been suddenly submerged. Mr Allanson-Winn, a member of the Society of Engineers, did well to call attention to the need of some public department whose duty it should be to make reliable records of the changes taking place in our coast-line; and his paper read before the recent meeting of the British Association is worthy of earnest attention. It is almost certain that, as he claims, a large saving in the future would result from the adoption of the remedies he suggests.

ARTIFICIAL INDIGO.

Eighteen years ago Professor Bayer discovered how the valuable vegetable dye, indigo, could be built up in the laboratory synthetically; and this discovery, followed by improvements in the pro-

cess, has led to the production of artificial or 'synthetic' indigo on such a large scale that the natural indigo industry is threatened with extinction. This advance of science falls terribly hard upon the indigo-planters of Behar in Northern India, where hundreds of thousands depend upon the growth of indigo for their daily bread; and the rivalry of the chemists' production is likely to lead to something like a public calamity. Those interested in the natural product assert that the synthetic indigo cannot compete with it in permanence; but careful tests show that this contention cannot be maintained. The new indigo, while possessing all the good qualities of the old, is preferred by dyers because it is more constant in its composition than that which comes from the Behar planters.

BALLOONS IN WARFARE.

Preparations for war in South Africa include the provision of several captive balloons and the apparatus wherewith to make hydrogen gas to fill them. Each balloon is furnished with eight photographic cameras pointing in different directions, so that when the pictures are developed and pieced together the General in command will have at his disposal a complete panorama of the country in which he is operating. This is expected to be of special value in South Africa, where bush and hills hide much from the observer on *terra firma*, and where ambuscade and guerilla tactics are the recognised forms of warfare. Military ballooning may be said to be on its trial in the

Transvaal; and it is a matter for regret that it is a system which so much depends for its success on the caprices of the weather.

THE FEATHERED POST.

The carrier-pigeon—the most ancient representative of wireless telegraphy—is probably employed to a greater extent to-day than ever before in the world's history. It has been demonstrated more than once that these wonderful messengers can cross the wide surface of the Atlantic Ocean with safety, and now the useful birds are in regular service on the steamers of the trans-Atlantic company which run between Havre and New York. It is often a matter of the most urgent importance to be able to communicate with the shore. We can easily recall many instances in which a broken shaft has so delayed a steamer that much anxiety has existed as to her fate— anxiety which would have been at once allayed by a reassuring message by pigeon-post. The system is open to any passenger who will go to the trouble of writing a post-card. These cards are reduced to tiny dimensions by means of photography, and the pigeon carries the film bearing the reduced messages in a quill beneath its wing. Upon arrival at its home, the messages are despatched to their destinations by post or wire. This system of communication between ship and shore is likely to become universal.

THE SAFETY OF RAILWAY TRAVELLING.

The risks of railway travelling are much exaggerated, a reflection of the old times when a man thought it necessary to make his will before undertaking the coach journey from, say, Edinburgh to London. Now we travel the same distance in hours instead of days, and think little of speeding along the lines at a mile a minute. That travelling at this rate is not accompanied by a tithe of the dangers which lurked around the old coaching system is easily capable of proof; but an interesting piece of evidence on the subject was recorded the other day, in the retirement of a North-Western engine-driver after fifty years' constant travelling. Mr Thomas Beck is now seventy-four years of age, and has travelled on his engine, during the past half-century, more than three million miles. This is equal in distance to one hundred and twenty voyages round the world, or to twelve excursions between the earth and the moon.

THE NEW CONSUMPTION CURE.

Some interesting facts are recorded in a recent report of the Hospital for Consumption at Hampstead, London, where the open-air system has been established since last January. The number of patients treated up to the end of September was

one hundred and eighty-three, and they are accounted for as follows: 43·7 per cent. were cured and returned to their work, 32·3 per cent. were distinctly improved, 7·6 per cent. slightly improved, 4·3 per cent. received no benefit, and 3·9 per cent. died. This is altogether a remarkable result, seeing that only a short time ago phthisis was regarded, except by quacks, as incurable. It is a common occurrence, we are told, for patients to enter the Hampstead hospital with all the usual indications of the malady, and to leave a few weeks later with the symptoms abated, and with an increase of many pounds in their weight. The medical officers in most cases keep up a correspondence with discharged patients, and they report that in cases where the improvement has been marked, and the necessary hygienic principles are properly carried out, there are no signs of any relapse.

MODERN BRANDY.

The Royal Institute of Public Health, recently assembled in congress at Blackpool, discussed, among other subjects, that of brandy; and according to the evidence of experts most of the French cognac which finds its way to this country does not owe its origin to the grape. The definite statement was made that 'the new kind of brandy did not fulfil the hopes based on the old-fashioned liquor ordered for patients by medical men.' Facts and figures are stubborn things, and a glance at the statistics available show that in the past year France produced only forty thousand hectolitres of alcohol made from wine—that is, real brandy—while she exported to this country above eighty-thousand hectolitres of brandy, so called; to say nothing of the two hundred thousand she sent to other countries, and the two millions she herself consumed. To put the matter in another way, the natural product was multiplied fifty-seven times by the aid of art. The art appears to consist in coaxing alcohol from corn, molasses, beet-root, wine lees, apples and pears, and 'other materials,' and the *phylloxera* which twenty years ago ruined so many of the vintages is credited with having founded the new industry.

BEES AND THEIR HONEY.

At the Grocers' Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, London, which closed in October, a department was devoted to English honey, and many improvements in its production were demonstrated. The old method of letting the bees do as they like, and killing them when their work is finished, crushing the comb, and draining the honey through coarse cloth, has given way to a far more scientific system. The lives of the insects are preserved, and they are induced to construct the comb in square sections. This comb is unsealed by shaving off the waxen ends of the cells by special apparatus,

and after the sweet contents have been extracted the empty comb is once more returned to the hive to be refilled by the busy workers. The modern plan is based on the observation that the bees can make honey much quicker than they can build the cells to hold it.

REMEDY FOR THE LOCUST PLAGUE.

The *German African Gazette* is responsible for the statement that a Mr Cooper, of Richmond, Natal, has discovered a new method of destroying swarms of locusts. The plan consists in catching and smearing a few of the locusts with 'locust fungus,' a preparation which is cultivated in the Bacteriological Institute at Grahamstown, Cape Colony. The insects are then allowed to return to the swarm, which they infect with what is presumably a fatal disease. The same preparation applied on damp soil in places where it is known locusts will swarm leads to their complete destruction. Twenty swarms are said to have been destroyed in this manner. Although this statement is open to doubt, it may be remembered that a celebrated bacteriologist once proposed to deal with the rabbit-pest in Australia in much the same way. It is quite possible that a similar remedy might be found for the malarial mosquito, for it is only by such means that its extirpation could be brought about.

WIRELESS TELEPHONY.

Marconi's wireless telegraph has already a rival in the system of telephonic communication with which Sir William Preece has been experimenting at Carnarvon. At the south end of Menai Strait, near Llanfagan Church, four high poles have been erected; at some distance away other poles have been set up; and still farther off, at Belan Fort, is a high pole supporting a coil of wire, which finds its terminal in deep water. Between these points communication is easily carried on without intermediary wires, a series of taps at one station being very plainly heard by means of the telephone at the other. It need hardly be pointed out that by means of such taps the Morse alphabet can be employed, and words conveyed from point to point with the rapidity of the ordinary telegraphic apparatus. In point of speed, therefore, the system is better than Marconi's wireless telegraph; but as yet the sounds are not so distinct as is thought desirable.

MACHINERY versus HAND-LABOUR.

Cassier's Magazine, which devotes itself to engineering subjects, calls attention to the steady growth of machinery employment with the corresponding reduction of hand-labour, and points out how both in Europe and America enterprise

has profited to a remarkable degree by the change. As an example of the saving effected, the case of the English blast-furnaces is quoted, where pig-iron casting-machines have led to a saving of about twopence per ton. This does not seem much; but a saving of that amount on the whole of the pig-iron produced throughout Great Britain last year would represent an economy of seventy thousand pounds. It was further pointed out that the introduction of mechanical applications to the mining and quarrying industries might have a remarkable economical effect, inasmuch as the saving of only a penny per ton in the cost of the limestone quarried in 1898 would represent a little nest-egg of fifty thousand pounds, while a similar reduction in the cost of the coal raised during the same period would mean a lump sum of one hundred thousand pounds. Never was the wise policy of taking care of the pence more strongly put, and the matter cannot be too strongly urged upon British manufacturers in view of increasing foreign competition.

A METROPOLITAN SUBWAY.

We are all accustomed to hear of secret passages beneath old castles and churches, and most ruins have some tradition of the kind. But few persons were aware, before Mr Threlfall called attention to it the other day, that beneath the busy streets of London there is an iron tube some four feet in diameter and more than two miles long—which was at one time used, on the pea-shooter principle, for the despatch of mails between the General Post-Office and some of its sub-stations. The scheme was abandoned because of the heavy expense involved in working; but the tube still remains, and Mr Threlfall suggests that it might once more be utilised by the Post-Office. Instead of the old pneumatic arrangement, he proposes to employ electric traction—an electric railway, in fact, that should be devoted to the carriage of mails and parcels only. The matter has already been brought before the officials concerned; but it is a matter for consideration whether the plan—in view of the small distance covered—could economically displace the horses and carts at present in use for the same duty.

MOTOR VEHICLES.

It seems to be part of the sturdy Briton's character that he should be conservative in his suspicion of new-fangled devices; anyhow, he is extremely slow to adopt inventions and discoveries which other nations are willing at once to assimilate. The habit has its drawbacks; but it has the pretty constant advantage that we leave the great expense and trouble of experiment to others, and profit much in the end by their labours. It has been especially so with the motor-car

business, which, although so popular in France and other countries, has been so slowly taken up here that the sight of a motor-car in our streets still attracts attention and excites remark. A new era has, however, recently dawned for the Metropolis, where motor-omnibuses are now in regular use. It remains to be seen whether these mechanically propelled road-vehicles will so familiarise the public with their use as to cause a greatly increased employment for them. One of the difficulties in the way is to familiarise horses, as well as human beings, with the appearance of the new vehicles.

DESTRUCTION OF SMALL BIRDS.

The question of the slaughter of small birds, to whose labours in keeping down insect pests the agriculturist owes so much, again and again comes up for discussion. Some good has been done in persuading ladies not to buy bird's plumage for the decoration of their headgear; but the birds have other enemies besides the milliners. A correspondent of the *Times*, who dates his letter from Padua, complains of what he rightly calls the grievous sights to be seen in the market-places of many Italian towns. In these towns hundreds and hundreds of singing birds, many of them migrants from the British Isles, are daily sold for the dinner-table: woodpeckers, kingfishers, goldfinches, wrens, robins, larks, and blackbirds; indeed, all the songsters of our hedgerows are found there for sale. The Italian law forbids this slaughter of small birds, but it goes on nevertheless; and until the people refuse to eat such fare, as all right-minded people will, the mischief must continue. Unfortunately the right-minded persons do not form the majority, either in Italy or anywhere else.

THE FOOD OF SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

Much difference of opinion has existed as to the best kind of ration for soldiers and sailors in tropical climates; and in order to get the best opinion on the subject a prize of a hundred dollars, or a medal of that value, has been offered by Dr Louis L. Seaman for the best paper on the subject. The title of the paper is to be 'The Ideal Ration for an Army in the Tropics,' and the competition is open to all commissioned medical officers of the American army and navy, regular and volunteer. The prize is offered through the Military Service Institution of America, and all papers must be submitted by the 1st of March next year.

A NEW CYCLE LOCK.

Messrs Tranter & Co., of Trowbridge, have introduced a clever little device, which will be

welcomed by cyclists, under the name of the 'cyclok.' It can be affixed with great facility to the steering-head of any machine, and adds only one ounce to the weight which the rider has to carry. The chief feature of the appliance is a bolt with a milled head, a quarter-turn of which will lock the steering in the ordinary way; but a complete locking can be effected by giving the bolt another quarter-turn. From this fully locked condition the machine cannot be released without the use of a key, so that the introduction of the new device will not be applauded by the light-fingered fraternity who devote their attention to the abstraction of bicycles.

'WIRELESS WONDERS.'

Under this somewhat sensational heading some of the experiments with wireless telegraphy in connection with the British Association meeting at Dover were described. But there was absolutely nothing new introduced, and the experiments were, as usual, confined to the Channel. Communication was made with the South Foreland, 'through,' it was stated, four miles of cliff; but expert opinion is divided whether the electric waves do not pass over, rather than penetrate, an obstruction of this kind. Special importance was attached to the fact that a message was received from Boulogne in three minutes, as compared with 'invariably not less than an hour' occupied in getting a cable message from Boulogne or Calais to Dover. On the face of the matter, this is rather crushing for the cable, because it is difficult to get the newspaper-reading public to understand that there is all the difference in the world between pre-arranged experiments, specially laid out for success, and ordinary, everyday practical working. If a cable could be cleared of its ordinary traffic, and operators were seated at either end ready to transmit a single message, it could probably be got through in even less than three minutes; it being the number and length of the messages, and not the passage of the electric current, which occupies time. If a comparison is to be made with cables, let us suppose that half-a-score, or even half-a-dozen, Marconis are trying to signal across the Channel at the same time—would not babel be the result? The drawback to 'wireless telegraphy,' so called, is that it requires a monopoly of the sea, and that is rather a large order. But you may lay as many cables as you like across the Channel, and each may contain as many wires, and you may be 'speaking' to half the capitals of Europe at the same time, and there would not be the least misunderstanding or confusion. This it is which constitutes the advantage of tying the electric current to a wire. The public has made up its mind not to be instructed in this matter, and has been throwing away its cable shares to the tune of some millions, on the chance of cables becoming useless and antiquated.

Well might the newly-appointed electrician to the Post-Office exclaim, as he did to an interviewer the other day, 'People seem to have gone wild over wireless telegraphy!' The Americans have taken the matter more philosophically, for while

the *New York Herald* admits that its Marconi messages in connection with the yacht races worked perfectly, it adds: 'No practical advantage is apparent, the accustomed methods being quite as good.'

FENLAND COLLIERIES.



Afternoon fades into evening on a late autumn day a peculiar note, almost of sadness, strikes a visitor for the first time to one of those hoary old villages which dot the borders of the Fenland district of south-west Norfolk. The old church, towering gray and silent up into the murky air; the cottage doors close shut, with suggestions of inmates indicated by shadows thrown fitfully by the flickering firelight on the drawn blinds—shadows mostly moving round and near some central object, doubtless the tea-table, waiting the husband's return from the rapidly darkening fields and homesteads. These features produce in one an almost melancholy impression of homelessness, which happily is not of long duration when once 'mine inn' opens its hospitable doors, and welcomes the wanderers with blazing fire and good cheer.

In passing down the almost deserted streets—for the children have been home from school a good hour—one cannot have failed to notice a peculiarly pungent odour permeating the heavy autumnal atmosphere; and upon entering the cosy room and drawing near the cheerful blaze, the source of this wholesome pungency is at once discovered; for the fire which glows so cheerily on the hearth is fed with fuel locally obtained—that is to say, dug from the fen hard by. The peculiar odour impregnating the air arises from this 'turf'—as it is called here, not 'peat'—and is locally considered, perhaps with some amount of truth, a great preventive of chest attacks.

Nearly all these villages we have mentioned are situated on the shoulder of the high ground rising from and keeping sentry over the Fenland; and, should the morning be a bright one, a walk to the crest of the upland will show a considerable area of the land of dikes under panoramic conditions. The fen itself hardly ever receives justice when viewed from a distance, even in the summer. Under these circumstances a peculiarly sombre tint makes itself apparent in the herbage, and a grayness in the foliage. But down there among the ditches—drains they call them—with the sun shining brightly, and the breeze softly caressing the waving ramparts of sedge, reeds, cat's-tails, and moisture-loving plants of all kinds that rise tier above tier from some neglected drain—under these conditions, the

prodigality of natural beauty is a revelation. Here in this overgrown ditch is a creamy, swaying mass of meadow-sweet, foaming high over the heads of the other and lesser growths, its almond-like perfume floating afar on the breeze.

The birds like the fen, too. Here they are to be seen in myriads; at times many species of great rarity. These large gatherings are doubtless attracted by the varied insect-life thronging every leaf and bloom.

But we are not here botanising or bird-hunting, but to see how and whence the 'turf' is obtained which forms such an important item in the economy of the district.

Large areas of the fens have a thick substratum of blue clay or gault. This, when raised and spread over the land, with which it becomes amalgamated by frost and mechanical means, is not only the most natural but also the most efficacious fertiliser of this class of land. The 'turf' obtained from above this clay is the hardest and best. Unfortunately the layer is a thin one, more frequently but one turf (twelve inches) deep. The next best locality, with no clay beneath, though not yielding quite so good a quality, shows a stratum sometimes three turfs deep. There is another class of fenland which yields no 'turf' at all, but consists (till black, slimy depths are reached) of nothing but loose, friable black earth of poor fertility.

The operation of 'turving' is carried on during spring and early summer. The locality where digging is to commence having been fixed upon, the first operation is to clear from a space one yard wide and the length of the intended turf-pit the loose top-soil called 'moor' to the depth of ten or twelve inches, when the turf is reached, which has a soapy kind of solidity. A special tool is now brought into requisition, known as a 'becket'; this tool is a kind of wooden spade, shod with a steel cutting-edge, and gauged, by a slip of steel at right angles to the blade, to the correct width and thickness of the brick or 'hod' of turf required; the length of each 'hod' is the depth of the spade (twelve inches). Nine of these bricks are taken from the whole width of the pit (thirty-six inches). As they are dug they are deposited on the ground beside the open pit, where a regular wall is built of them, with interstices left between them for the admission of air and sunshine to dry them.

After lying in this wall for a week or two, according to the weather, they are turned, and as soon as thoroughly dry are either carted home to be deposited in sheds, or are stacked up on the land in large squares, with the tops well protected; as, if they get wet after being once dried, they break and crumble very easily, and much waste is occasioned by handling them.

Turf-diggers frequently have their operations not only hindered but entirely stopped by the numerous portions of long-submerged trees which lie deep down in the heart of the 'turf' stratum. Many of the gate-posts in the locality are made from logs of oak unearthed in this manner, the wood being in splendid preservation and extremely hard. One peculiarity attaching to these buried trees, and which affords much scope for scientific speculation, is that they all lie in one direction, much as though some terrific tempest-blast had smitten them to the earth at one and the same moment. Other odds and ends of antiquarian interest have been found.

Many of these turf-diggers and others hire a small piece of this fenland, which not only yields litter and coarse fodder for pony or donkey, but keeps the cottage fireside bright and cheerful; and the contemplation of the out-house, packed to its tiles with these black bricks, brings many a smile to the mother's

lips that would not otherwise be there, as she thinks of the tiny hands and faces that will not seek in vain its warmth and brightness.

DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

THE life is ebbing fast, thou aged Year!
This night that wintry sun of thine will set,
To rise no more. Thy days are told; and yet
It seems but yesterday thou didst appear!
But yesternight we watched, all silent, here,
The old Year's dying hours, while backward rolled
Its story, page by page; and now, behold!
Thy course is run. Even now thy moments wear
The fading hue of death. Farewell, old Friend!
Fain would we linger by thy side awhile,
And gather up thy mem'ries, one by one,
While, in the vacant chairs, dear faces smile.
Upon us, as of old. But ever on,
Life's current bears us—swifter to the end!

M. C. C.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

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CHRISTMAS 1899.

THE BRANCH BANK AT MOOROOBIN.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP' AND 'IN THE GREAT DEEP.'

CHAPTER I.



HE man at Moorroobin's shot himself, Chesney; and you have to take charge. For goodness' sake do the best you can for us, and see if you can't change the luck!'

In such words did I receive my promotion as manager of a branch of the Bank of New Carpentaria at a far-land Australian township. Some people might have been proud of the chance. But I was not particularly so. Indeed, I would much rather have stayed at headquarters in Brisbane. Moorroobin had a shocking reputation amongst us. In the two years since the opening, four managers had come to grief there. One poisoned himself with strychnine; one died in *delirium tremens*; one wandered away into the bush, to be found dead and almost naked weeks afterwards. And now, to finish up in sympathy with them, Mostyn must go and blow his brains out! No wonder that I did not show much elation as the chief spoke, or that my fellow-officials took as solemn a farewell of me as if it were for the last time.

When I eventually reached Moorroobin I did not altogether wonder at the way those other fellows had carried on, for a more hopeless place you never saw in your life. In the heart of the back-blocks, nearly two hundred miles

from the nearest railway, dumped down on a bit of dusty plain fair in the sun's eye, stood the couple of score or so of shanties that constituted the township.

To every point of the compass, far as the eye could reach from the highest elevation attainable, stretched a sea of *brigalow* and *mulga* scrub interspersed with great swamps of polygonum, or, as the local term went, *lignum*. A deep crack in the earth, running in tortuous bends no one knew whither, was called the Mooroo River. At times there was water in its bed—perhaps once in three years; at others it was merely a dusty, burr-lined furrow, with sides rounded by the trampling of stock passing through in hundreds of thousands, both sheep and cattle, on their way to southern markets. And indescribably dreary and mean as the place seemed, in reality, so far as our business went, it was of importance, as being not only the centre of a vast pastoral district, but including within its boundaries a new and promising goldfield. The bank itself, like many of the others, was a 'frame structure'—that is, one formed of boards brought up by teams from the railway terminus, and each piece marked ready to put into position; the roof was of galvanised iron; and there were, in addition to the business apartment—furnished with a broad counter, a

few desks, and a second-hand safe—a couple of small bedrooms. Both my accountant and myself slept in the house, but had our meals at the hotel across the road—a nondescript building of iron, weather-boards, round saplings, and calico. There were other three 'hotels,' varying little in style of architecture, but all giving the *pas* for fashion to the 'Imperial,' in which the bank manager took his meals in the 'parlour,' mostly in solitary state, except for the company of a million flies, unless a 'boss drover,' the ubiquitous 'commercial,' or a stray squatter or two should happen to drop in.

Rolleston, my assistant, was a nice lad of about nineteen, drafted out of the head office to gain experience. A native, and an uncommonly good-looking one—blessed, too, with a huge fund of animal spirits that enabled him to cheerfully swallow flies, and treat fleas, ants, mosquitoes, dust, heat, and the general abomination of the place in a Micawber-like spirit that made me envious—he speedily explored the resources of the surrounding country as regarded social pleasures.

'Mostly bachelor stations,' he declared after a few Saturdays and Sundays of conscientious riding in every direction. 'Awfully slow shops, where they can talk nothing but stock, stock, stock; live like hermits; up at daylight, to bed at dark; no music, no singing, no nothing.'

'No girls anywhere, Charlie?' I asked.

'Only at Flett's,' he replied, the quick blood crimsoning in his fair cheeks. 'My word, Esth—Miss Flett—is a beauty, if you like. Better come out and see her for yourself,' he added, noticing my rather incredulous smile.

'I've seen her brother,' I answered, 'and don't think much of him at any rate. You know, of course, he is a customer of ours, and a precious bad one at that. From what I can make out, Mostyn advanced him more than his whole place and stock are worth; and now he wants more money still. He certainly won't get it from me until I can be sure of how matters really are at Koortani. I expect I shall have to visit the station presently, but not altogether to see Miss Flett. And, Charlie,' I continued, 'if I were you I wouldn't get so thick with them. It will be rather awkward—won't it?—if the bank has presently to take possession. I have no objection to an occasional visit; but I don't care about this Saturday till Monday morning business you are going in for of late.'

Perhaps I spoke rather sharply, but I disliked William Flett intensely, even from the little I had seen of him at our first interview, in which he had, when refused an advance on a block of freehold already held by us at what I had ascertained was more than its value, asserted that 'the — bank was robbing him.' Charlie made no reply, but I could see that

for the rest of the evening he was thoughtful—a rather unusual mood for him.

To my surprise, the next morning Miss Flett herself turned up, and attempted to succeed where her brother had failed. It being a slack time, Charlie had gone over to Bundarubba, a township of much the same size and quality as our own. Thus I was quite alone when I saw a woman ride up to the door, and, springing lightly off a bay horse, tie him to the rail, gather her habit over her arm, and enter the bank. About twenty-two or twenty-three years of age; tall, with an almost perfect figure; dark oval face, out of which flashed a pair of great black eyes; a large but well-formed mouth full of fine teeth, now showing in a pleasant smile as she met my, doubtless, inquiring gaze. Esther Flett was, as Rolleston had said, a beautiful girl, and quite unlike anything I had pictured to myself from my knowledge of her uncouth brother.

'I have come,' she began at once in a clear, loud voice, 'Mr Chesney, to apologise for William's behaviour the other day. I'm afraid he must have been too long at the bar of the "Imperial" yonder. Anyhow, he's sorry now for what he said. And he made me promise to ride in and tell you as much. And, Mr Chesney,' she continued, leaning both arms on the counter and smiling most bewitchingly, whilst making great play with those wonderful eyes of hers, 'you really must let us have that five hundred pounds on the Wilga block. Surely you couldn't refuse such old customers as we are?'

Although only a few years older than herself, I was born a long way north of the Tweed, also was rather unimpressible as regarded the sex—with one exception. And the latter fact it was, perhaps, that enabled me, having recovered my first surprise, to answer coolly enough, 'Thank you for the apology, Miss Flett. I should have thought more of your brother, however, if he could have seen his way to bring it himself. As to the advance, I regret to say that the utmost I can promise is to lay your proposal before my directors.'

I suppose the tone I spoke in sounded final—I know I tried to make it so—for, as I finished, the full voluptuous lips tightened gradually, whilst in the middle of the broad, low brow appeared a deep vertical furrow, and the big eyes simply blazed with fury as her gauntleted hand pressed the silver hammer of her whip deep into the soft pine barrier between us.

For perhaps a minute she stood staring intently at me. Then all at once the great threatening frown relaxed and smoothed out, the fierce light in her velvety eyes smouldered down, the scarlet curve of her lips showed again, and, with a laugh, she said saucily, 'Well, Mr Chesney, you're a hard man. I suppose we'll have to go over to Mr Mayhew at Bundarubba—the

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opposition pawnbroking establishment, you know—and see what he'll do for us. Poor Harry Mostyn wouldn't have served me so meanly.'

'And where is poor Harry Mostyn now, I wonder?' I asked grimly, and perhaps pitilessly, as she lowered her veil and turned away.

'At rest, I hope and trust,' she replied in a low voice, facing me and crossing herself devoutly. And for just one moment I felt myself a brute. Then, mindful of the look, by turns cajoling, languishing, tempting, then almost tiger-like in its intense fierceness, that I had seen in those eyes of hers, I turned impatiently to my ledgers as she sprang into her saddle and cantered away down the street in a cloud of dust. But I could not fix my attention on the work, as ever between my gaze and the long columns of figures rose that beautiful face, one minute distorted by passion, the next shining in careless smiles. Truly an extraordinary creature to find in such a place!

Just then an old hawker came in with a bundle of dirty cheques on half-a-dozen different banks that he wished to place to his credit.

'I met that Flett gal,' he presently remarked, with bush freedom, as I carefully scanned his paper. 'She was goin' like thunder down the road yonder. 'Speck,' he continued, chuckling, 'she'd been tryin' to work the horacle off on you same's she used to try it on afore with the others. You bet she's a smart un is Esther! So was her dad. I knowed him thirty year ago—ole Flett—when he was carryin' on the roads. Made a bit o' money them days wi' loadin' at five pounds a ton. Then he took up Koortani, an' got switched to Susie Penton as kep' the "Bushman's Joy" over at Pine Ridge. Ay, ay, I mind him well. Hard ole nut he was. But, from all I can hear, it's close up a cooey with the station.'

'Cheques are all right, Dickson,' I said presently, 'except this one of William Flett's. Account's overdrawn here. However, it's on the New Guinea branch at Bundarubba. There may be enough to meet it. Better take it to Mr Mayhew and see. I can't touch it.'

'Well, blow my Moses!' exclaimed the old man, in huge disgust. 'Now, I wonder who rung that thing in to me, knowin' my eyes is gettin' cronk? Well, well! it's only thirty bob, so it won't make nor break me. Catch me takin' paper o' Bill Flett's if I'd knowed it. Not much! Why, even in his bes' days you couldn't trust ole Pablo, an' his son's a dashed sight slipperier!'

'Pablo!' I exclaimed. 'Why, that's a foreign name—Spanish or Portuguese?'

'Well,' replied old Dickson grumpily as I handed him his deposit receipt, 'wasn't ole Flett a furriner? A Spanisher, or a Maltee, or a Carthelic, or somethin' I forgits what now. An' his proper name wasn't Flett neither, but Valetto. Then in time they shortens it same 1899.]

as it is now. Can't ye see the furrin blood in the children? That there Bill's mean enough to skin a flea for the sake o' the taller. But the gal ain't bad-earted. There's no traveller ever leaves the station wantin' a bit o' ration when Miss Esther's about. Well, I mus' be gittin'. Got to push on to Cubby to-night. So long, mister.'

CHAPTER II.



'ES,' the sergeant said, 'I expect it's safe enough. The district's a quiet one; and even if anybody knew, they wouldn't be likely to meddle. Still, if I were you, I'd feel more comfortable if somebody was in charge—say Mr Rolleston, now? Of course Cat-eyed Jim's right as rain. So are all the drivers on the line. And'—

'I've got to obey orders, sergeant,' I replied, 'exactly the same as yourself. Only my bosses are stricter, if anything, than yours. I confess I'd be easier in my mind if there was a man with the money. But the people below say expressly to book as ordinary merchandise through Cobb & Co.'s agent. So there you are! I'll just put the stuff in a couple of boxes—two thousand five hundred pounds in each—and send them away. As it came safely, so it may return.'

Some weeks after Esther Flett's visit the sum of five thousand pounds had arrived from the capital in anticipation of a contingency that never came off. I am writing of the time of the '93 banking troubles. During these a run was fully expected by the parent bank and its country branches—fortunately very few in number compared with some of the others. Therefore, all precautions had been taken to provide against such an event. But although the public rushed other and larger banks, they never once troubled that of New Carpentaria. Now, so much specie being unnecessary, in addition to the rather large sum in hand for gold buying, I was about returning my share of the defence fund to headquarters. Hence my talk with Sergeant Devine on the veranda of the 'Imperial.' Besides myself, the sergeant, of course Rolleston, and, at the last minute, Cobb & Co.'s agent, I was perfectly certain that no one knew the gold was to be despatched. On the boxes were merely the letters 'B.N.C.' in black paint; and in the way-bill was an item, 'Bank of New Carpentaria, Brisbane; two packages.'

As at ten o'clock one dark night the coach stopped opposite our shanty, and Rolleston and I carried the boxes out and stowed them away in the body of the vehicle under a mass of mail-bags and parcels, Cat-eyed Jim—so called from his

supposed ability to see in the dark—chuckled, and remarked from the box-seat that he'd 'take 'em for his year's little cheque, strike him bandy if he wouldn't;' whilst a Chinese, the only passenger inside, grunted and swore as the corner of one dropped on his toe.

In another minute the whip cracked and the four fresh horses plunged away with the mass of steel springs, hickory, and leather that went to make up the Royal Mail, as if it were a feather-weight behind them.

Of Miss Flett I had of late seen nothing, for she seldom came into the township. Her brother, however, had often been at the 'Imperial'—a tall, awkward, knock-kneed fellow, swarthy as a gipsy, and even in his cups dour and sullen. But with it all there was a look of his sister about him, especially in eyes and scowl. I never spoke to him, and on his part he seemed anxious, if anything, to avoid me. Nor was ever any reference made to that errand of his sister's. Rolleston, I was sorry to notice, continued his visits to Koortani. But of course, beyond a certain limit, my authority carried no weight with him. In his own time he was able to do as he pleased. And I was grieved to perceive that every minute he could spare was passed at the station which, only a couple of miles from the township, was so easy of access, well supplied as he was with horseflesh by the Fletts. Of late Charlie had changed from the light-hearted, cheerful lad of former days into a morose, gloomy-tempered one, whose rare laughter sounded forced and unreal. He grew thin, too, and all the bright colour forsook his cheeks; he lost his appetite, and, as I could plainly hear, moaned and babbled in his sleep.

'The first calf-love,' said Devine, one of the few men with whom I enjoyed a chat. 'Takes 'em all so. It's like prickly heat—throw cold water on it and it'll itch the more. Best way to let it run its course. The young woman up there's only playing with him. It's her nature to. Last time she had the manager. No go this shot—eh? So took second best.' And the sergeant laughed and darted a quizzical glance at me as we sat smoking in his quarters.

The third morning after the departure of the mail I was awakened by some one pounding heavily on the door of the bank. Rising and unlocking it, I saw the sergeant, his eyes sparkling with excitement as he exclaimed, 'Mr Chesney, the coach has been bailed up and all the money stolen!'

For a minute I thought he was joking. But a second look at his earnest face undeceived me. Hurriedly dressing, I followed Devine over to the 'Imperial,' where at a table sat Cat-eyed Jim, very pale and worn, eating ravenously; whilst about the room and doors, early as it was, clustered Moorobin—man, woman, and child—black, white, and yellow.

'Now,' said the sergeant as at last Jim, with a sigh of repletion, leant back in his chair, 'let's hear all about it.'

'Well,' said Jim, leisurely shredding tobacco into his palm as he spoke, 'you know since the company shifted the stage it's a good thirty mile from 'ere to Deep Crick. Howsomever, I gits to the Crick about 'arf-past three. It were a fine night enough; an' I whips my 'orses up the steep bank outer the dry gully, when, jest as I gits to the top an' stands for a spell on the cleared line, a 'orseman comes outer the scrub to the right 'and an' shouts, "Bail up, or I'll blow a 'ole through ye!"

"Oh," sez I, larfin', an' thinkin' it was one o' the blokes from the stage lookin' fer 'orses, "shut yer silly mouth; do, an' don't go actin' the goat at this time o' night." Well, I 'adn't 'ardly spoke when bang goes a pistol, an' ping goes a bullet jest parst my ear'ole. Well, a joke's a joke; but yer knows, sargint, as there's a meejum.'

Pausing at this, the cat-eyed one commenced to deliberately fill an old briar pipe whose bowl bore signs, in charred and ragged edges, of many a windy night. I was writhing with impatience.

But the sergeant, touching me on the shoulder, said, 'Give the beggar rope or he'll turn dog on us and sulk like a Jew lizard. I know him. He's had a pretty tough length to split, too, these last twenty-four hours. Patience!'

Amongst the crowd at the door I could see Rolleston's white face peering with eager, haggard eyes. Over all their heads the flaming sun rested on the top of a clump of silvery *brigalows* somewhat higher than their fellows, and shot hot beams across on the iron roofs; the hum of early legions of flies filled the room, foul with overnight fumes of rum and tobacco; on the veranda squatted a dozen black fellows with their gins, stolid and speechless except for an occasional grunt of 'Gib it bacca?' 'Gib it chillin'?' It was only 5 A.M., but I knew that the mercury was rapidly climbing up the nineties, for already the crowd was sweating freely, and glasses were beginning to clink and clatter in the adjoining bar. But at last Jim got his pipe in going order, and resumed:

'Well, as I sez, there's a meejum. An' two quid a week don't run to bullet-oles. So when I sees another 'orseman ride outer the scrub an' collar the leaders, I chucks it, an' ups with my 'ands. Inside I hears John Chinaman screechin' like a bloomin' 'possum as the fust feller hauls 'im out an' ties 'im up like a killin' vether. Meantimes, t'other feller's got the 'arness off o' them 'orses quick an' lively, an' turned 'em loose inter the scrub.

"Come down outer that, driver!" is the nex' performance. Down I comes. It's dark o' course. But it ain't so dark but what I kin

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see they've got thick black veils on, an' that one o' their 'orses 'as four big white stockin's. John's a-grumblin' an' cursin' like billy-ho, an' one o' the chaps fetches 'im a wipe over the nut that quietens 'im. Then they ties my 'ands—soaked green 'ide strips, all nice an' ready—marches me away inter the scrub, an' lashes me up 'ard an' fast to a saplin'.

"If it's the mails yer after," I sez, "take what yer want, but don't destroy nothin'. That'll make it all the easier fer ye bimebye when ye gits yer fifteen stretch fer rob'ry hunder harms."

"Shut up, ye cat-eyed cow!" sez one perlutely, "or Cobb & Co. 'll 'ave a drivin' wacaney."

'So I shuts up. Then they marches John off inter the scrub on t'other side o' the road, drags the coach outer sight, an' presen'y I 'ears 'em go trampin' off down the bed o' the crick.

'Well,' continued Jim after tossing off a tumbler of rum and water, 'arter a bit I starts cooein' like anythin', an' John he answers from t'other side. An' I thinks, "Surely somebody mus' come along presen'y an' 'ear the shivoo the pair of us is makin'." But you knows traffic is scarce this time o' the year, an' I got that 'oarse I 'ad to give in at last. Likewise the greenhide ties begins to dry and shrink an' cut like blazes. All that night an' nex' day till sundown we was there till Bill an' Joe from the changin'-stage, gettin' scared at no mail a-comin', started out to look fer 'er, an' picks up 'er tracks; an', a bit arter, 'ears John a-singin', off his 'ead. Presen'y they 'ears me likewise a-ravin', bein' pretty bad with the 'eat an' the cuttin' o' them 'ide strips. 'Owever, arter a drink o' water an' a mouthful o' johnny-cake, I soon bucks up to the mark, an' leavin' John to go on to the change-hut, I gits Bill's 'orse 'an comes along 'ere like thunder. The mails ain't touched, ne'er a bag of 'em. All that was took is Mr Chesney's two boxes. Enuff, too, I 'speck!'

'Evidently they knew you, Jim,' remarked the sergeant, motioning for silence as a babble of comments and guesses broke out amongst the crowd when those inside retired and related what they had heard. 'Are you sure you didn't recognise either of the fellows—their voices, now?'

'Couldn't swear to neither of 'em,' replied the driver. 'An' as fer their voices, why, they didn't talk much, an' then they mumbled and muttered like as they 'ad the toothache awful bad.'

Half-an-hour after listening to Jim's story, the sergeant, myself, and Boney the black tracker were cantering along towards Deep Creek.

'What's the weight of five thousand sovereigns, Mr Chesney?' asked the sergeant as we 1899.]

sped through the bush, following Boney, in short cuts that took miles and miles off the distance.

'About as much as one man could carry, and give him all he knew how,' I replied.

'Umph!' said the sergeant, relapsing into silence, and evidently thinking hard.

Landscape there is none in far-western Queensland—only a monotony in greens, differing in shade from the silvery-sage of the *brigalow* to the deep, dull hue of *yarran* and *mulga*, with an occasional brighter glimpse of drooping *wilga* or lightwood. At times across the track taken by Boney on his old flea-bitten grey, a mob of kangaroos would go thud-thudding, or a flock of emus waddle swiftly with outstretched necks and quivering bodies; whilst now and again a score of white tags would flash out of sight as we disturbed a colony of rabbits feeding on some sandhill. At times we travelled over miles of *lignum* swamps, rough and honeycombed with holes out of which grew thick clumps of wiry polygonum, whose tender tops, when green, stock are fond of; then for miles again our course lay through scrub. Umbrella-*mulga* and the evil-smelling *gidyea*, with its yellow blossoms; feathery *brigalow*; an occasional leopard-tree; emu, cotton, and *budda* bushes with leaves of deep green, shining as if newly lacquered; willow-like *wilgas* and spiny needle-woods, together with dozens of minutely-flowered shrubs, mostly bearing blossoms of a white and lilac colour, that no botanist has yet named. Squatter pigeons whirled like rockets from the seeding *brigalows*; thousands of pink-breasted *galahs* rose from the *nardoo* patches to the sound of our horses' hoofs thumping on the sandy soil. And always above us the hot sun and blue sky; ever to right and left, ahead and behind, the monotony of greens.

'You're certain, Mr Chesney,' asked the sergeant, breaking silence after his long spell of thinking, 'that nobody except us three—yourself, I, and Mr Rolleston—knew that the gold was to leave at any particular time—say a day or so before it was actually put in the coach?'

'Positively certain,' I replied.

'Umph!' muttered the sergeant once more.

All at once with a quick wheel Boney bore to the left through a clump of hop-bush, and, before we knew it, we cantered out into the main road. Then, descending and ascending the banks of a dry creek, in another minute or so we were at the scene of the 'sticking up,' with the black fellow off his horse and nosing about like a hound at fault. At fault, decidedly; for though he could show us where the bushrangers had waited on their horses till they heard the mail coming, he could do no more. There were tracks in every direction around where the released coach-horses had fed on the scanty

tussocks and then wandered down the creek-bed, probably looking for water after their heavy stage.

'Baal mine tink it find that pfeller,' said Boney after circling about for an hour or so. 'Too much *yarraman tinna* [horses' feet] alonga this country.'

Certainly Boney was not the black tracker of fiction, able to run a lizard's trail over a mile of rocks at a full canter! At the changing-place—merely a rough log hut, rougher stable, and a small paddock—whither we presently rode, we found only the Chinese and Bill, one of the grooms, whose mate, Joe, had gone on with the coach.

The former was quite recovered, and showed us with pride and exultation a ten-pound note, half-chewed, which at the first alarm he had stuffed into his mouth. But to all Devine's inquiries as to his having recognised the men it was simply, 'No savee.'

And yet it was from 'John' that the sergeant obtained the clue that led to the final discovery and its accompanying tragedy. As, after a rough meal, we were about to depart, I saw him beckon the sergeant, and, with a grin on his lemon-coloured visage, whisper something in his ear, to which Devine only answered severely, 'Rot, John! You've been dreaming. D'ye take me for a new chum?' At which John only grinned the more, and blandly remarked, 'All li! You no b'lieve me. You tink Ah Kee fool—eh?'

And I noticed that the sergeant bothered about no more tracking, but whistled and talked and chatted in a way that bothered me not a little, full of concern as I was, and anxious to be doing something towards finding the lost money. Half-way to Moorrobin, Devine and the tracker struck off across country towards a mining township lately sprung up some forty miles distant, leaving me to jog home alone and in a very bad temper.

Of course I was not to blame, for I had executed my instructions to the letter. And amongst bank servants, as with seamen, it is a pretty safe maxim to 'obey orders if you break owners.' Still, I knew—none better—that, although my superiors said never a word, the business was very far from conducive to promotion, and the consequent possession of the only girl in the world.

Since the days of the 'Kelly Gang' it was the most important haul of the kind—indeed, almost the only one—and therefore made some noise in the colony. The Bank of New Carpentaria offered one hundred pounds reward; the Government followed suit with a similar amount. But the robbers had disappeared utterly. Nor in the whole district could any horse be found carrying four white stockings. And if Devine suspected anything, he kept his own counsel very closely.



CHAPTER III.

ATTERS presently became more complicated. Mayhew, the manager of the New Guinea branch at Bundarubba, rode across one Saturday to condole with me on my ill-fortune. At least that was his ostensible mission; but in reality he was only too pleased to get a chance of crowing over one of the opposition men, and one, too, who had diverted a lot of business from his bank to the Bank of New Carpentaria. However, I received him hospitably, and listened with the best patience I could whilst he laid down the law as to the safe conveyance of specie, and remarked that in the course of a similar New Guinea transaction such a loss would have been impossible, all its officers being allowed a free hand in taking any precaution they might think fit.

'Why,' said he, 'I've got three thousand pounds in gold now at home that I am going to send down next week. But, you bet! M'Grath and a loaded "colt" rides with it in the coach. Indeed, I don't know that, now, after your affair, Chesney, I won't apply for an escort.'

When, however, poor Mayhew reached Bundarubba next day he found his accountant, M'Grath, strapped to his bed, blindfolded and nearly dead from suffocation by gagging with a towel. Also, the safe had been opened and looted bare of every coin it contained.

Late on Saturday night, it appeared, Mr M'Grath, while reading in bed, heard a horse stamping outside on the veranda, as at times stray ones would do, seeking refuge from mosquitoes. As he opened the door to drive the intruder away, two masked men had rushed in, and in five minutes had him fixed up very snugly. The building stood well back from the street, and was nearly hidden by trees, so there was no fear of the robbers being disturbed by the occupants of any of the straggling residences around.

As to the men, M'Grath could give positively no information whatever. The whole affair was so sudden that, as he expressed it, 'Be jakers! it was all over in a flash—so it was. An' me lyin' trussed up nate loike a turkey at Christmas-toime.'

Then for a while the district fairly swarmed with police and trackers, who scoured the scrub for miles around. But they found nothing except the visionary 'clues to the perpetrators of the daring outrage' that the metropolitan papers credited them with.

About this time I received a second visit from Esther Flett. Of late we had been buying a fair quantity of gold; and even as she entered the bank young Rolleston was busy weighing a

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parcel that had just come in. He looked up as she walked over to the counter, and I caught the swift, alluring, passionate glance she shot at him out of her splendid eyes, and noticed how the lad's colour came and went, and heard the delicate scales chink in his trembling hands. But the woman was a born actress, and the next minute she was speaking to me in the quiet, subdued voice of a client aware of being deeply on the wrong side of the ledger.

'My brother is unwell, Mr Chesney,' she said, with a deprecating little smile and down-cast eyes, 'and as we are thinking of putting Koortani in the market and leaving the district, he asked me to call and ascertain the total amount of our liabilities with your bank. Of course,' she added hurriedly, 'we should be quite unable to redeem the whole of the original mortgage. Still, the sale ought to enable us to pay the greater part of it, together with the interest up to date.'

Now, I was very angry at the manner in which she had snared, and, as I was only too certain, was playing with Charlie, solely, I thought, for her own amusement, and nothing more serious. Thus there was perhaps a spice of exultation in my voice as I replied, 'I am afraid, Miss Flett, that, with respect to Koortani, the time for entertaining terms from its owners has long gone by. Indeed, I have quite lately received advices from headquarters intimating the directors' intention of presently taking over the station and installing a manager of their own.'

I had expected, and perhaps rather wished, to provoke an outburst with this bit of information. But, to my surprise, she only laughed carelessly, and looking me full in the face, replied quietly, 'Dear me! How kind of them! Well, then, I suppose the sooner we start for Western Australia the better, if you are going to put a bailiff in. Nor need we trouble about liabilities now. Many thanks, Mr Chesney. I was sorry to hear of your misfortune. I hope you haven't debited that to the Koortani account! Good-morning to you.—*Au revoir*, Mr Rolleston,' she continued, crossing over and shaking hands with Charlie. 'Will would like to see you at the station to-morrow, and will send a horse in. You know we may not have many more chances of meeting if the bailiff is so soon to arrive.' And, giving me a parting nod of indifference, she glided out, followed by Charlie, who put her on her horse and stood talking for a few minutes.

'Was that a fact about the bank taking over the station?' he asked as he returned.

'Of course it was,' I replied gruffly. 'Do you think I would be likely to joke on such matters?'

'I'm sick and tired of this business,' he replied irrelevantly. 'I'm going to sling it. I'll send in my resignation next week.'

'Yes, do,' I said angrily, 'and follow the
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family to Western Australia. Don't be so silly, Charlie,' I continued in a softer voice, for the sight of the boy's face drawn with grief distressed me more than I cared to show. 'Are you going to ruin yourself utterly for the sake of a woman like that?'

'I won't hear a word against her, Mr Chesney!' he exclaimed, stiffening defiantly. 'She's an angel, and I'd follow her all over the world. What I've done has been for her sake, and of my own free will.'

'Well, I don't see that you've done very much except make a fool of yourself,' I replied dryly. 'Better go back to your work.'

The next evening Devine strolled in.

'I suppose,' he remarked after some talk, 'that you'll be sending gold away soon. I've noticed you've been buying pretty freely of late. And if so, I wish you'd do me a favour.'

'Yes,' I replied, 'I have a parcel ready now, as far as that goes. And this time I'll see that it gets to the railway in safety, anyhow. But what's the favour?'

'Well,' replied the sergeant, 'I wish you not to let a soul know about the matter except myself and—oh yes, of course, Mr Rolleston. Fact is,' continued Devine, 'I've got an idea, and perhaps if you'll help me to work it out, between us we may chance to recover that five thousand pounds. You'd not object to that, would you?'

'Indeed I wouldn't,' I replied. 'But this idea, now?'

'Well,' he went on, slowly puffing at his cigar, 'I'd rather not tell you the whole theory I'm building on, if you don't mind. It's a sort of trap, in fact. Probably it may fail. Still, you can help me to bait it. The coach comes through on Saturday night, under the altered table. Well, we can put the gold on board, and you'd better come yourself. Oh yes, and Mr Rolleston also. There might be some fun. Steele, my trooper, is back from Trycutta, and we'll leave him in charge of the bank. So that'll be safe enough. I've been waiting patiently for this chance, and meanwhile allowing others to try their luck. I don't promise, mind, to restore the lost money, but if you'll follow my lead I think there'll be a bit of a show.'

'Very well,' I replied after a few minutes' thought. 'It's a responsibility on my part—leaving the bank, I mean. But I'll chance it. It can't hurt me more than the first mull. But why bring Rolleston?'

'Well, you see,' said Devine in a preoccupied sort of way, slowly, and as if searching for a reason, 'he's young, and the experience may be of use to him in the future.'

'Oh, very well,' I made answer; 'please yourself.' All the same, I couldn't just then see the force of his reasoning as regarded Charlie. And Devine pressed the point, too. 'The youngster,' said he as he turned to leave, 'may not be willing to come. But, remember, I

depend on you to see that he does. You need not say that I shall be with you; indeed, I don't mean to show up till the coach reaches the bridge. Bring your pistol. Of course I'll see that there are no other passengers. However, don't forget it's only an experiment.'

Next day, as Charlie and I packed the gold—nearly five hundred ounces—I mentioned that I had decided not only to go myself, but to take him also; and, far from showing any unwillingness, I thought from his manner that he rather enjoyed the idea of the trip. In the evening he asked and obtained permission to ride out to Koortani, as he would be unable to go there on the following Saturday.

'I hope we shan't be stopped this time, anyhow,' he remarked as we drove the last nails and painted the 'B.N.C.' on the cover of the box. 'I expect I had better bring my six-shooter, though, in case of an accident.'

The driver of the mails this night was a stranger, Cat-eye being on a fine and long-sustained spree at Bundarubba and various bush 'pubs,' where callers 'shouted' willingly and often for the hero of the 'sticking-up at Deep Creek.'

At the approach to the long, white, wooden bridge that crosses the Mooroo, and that nobody ever uses except in those infrequent years when, fed by flood-waters from the wide flats, the dry gully assumes for a brief while the size and rolling volume of a great river, the mail drew up, and, with a word to the driver, Devine sprang to the box-seat, whilst the coach, turning off, lumbered down the steep bank and up the other side. Almost any bush whip prefers earth under his horses' feet to planking.

'Another passenger,' remarked Rolleston, peering out into the darkness, dimly lit by a second-quarter moon.

'Good-night!' called the sergeant from under the leathern hood. 'I'm going a bit of the way with you—just for company.'

'Police protection,' laughed Charlie back again. 'No need this time. I'll bet you a new hat on it!'

'Are you certain?' asked the sergeant sharply, turning to where the pair of us sprawled amongst a litter of mail-bags, boxes, and parcels.

'How could I be?' replied Rolleston, with, I thought, a defiant note in his voice. 'And, anyhow, it's nice to have you, you know, sergeant.'

'Umph!' grunted Devine discontentedly, and said no more. The coach lamps shed a splash of yellow on either side, falling now on some wheel-grazing tree-trunk, now on a bare patch; then for miles together thrusting vainly into solid masses of black scrub that seemed to stand up in the night like built walls. The leather curtains were looped up all around, for the air was full of heat, as, in spite of the nest of springs underneath us, we banged and jolted and bumped over ruts and ridgy swamps hard as road metal

with twelve months of drought. At times we plunged into soft sand, and then the noise of our progress deadened; you could hear how still and calm the night was, broken only by the driver's hiss and cluck of encouragement, or the sharp crack of his whip and the admonition to 'Git up, Jerry! Whitefoot, up! Star! Plover! Git *hup!*'

Bump, bump, swing, swing, jerk; sixteen iron-shod hoofs beating out a rough tune to an accompaniment of wild lurches and swayings, and slipping of stiff limbs braced against slippery cushions. Then suddenly I awoke from a restless, comfortless doze to the sound of the grating, hissing brakes as the coach took an almost perpendicular position, and the horses, backed into their breechings, slowed down to a walk.

'Deep Creek at last, thank goodness!' I muttered.—'We'll have a snack and a stretch presently, Charlie.'

'I'm ready for both,' he replied sleepily, gathering himself up from the bottom of the coach.

Looking out, I saw that the little moon must have long set; but the stars gave a faint light. Panting and straining, the horses were breasting the thirty-foot bank at the top of which, according to custom, was their five minutes' resting-place.

'S-s-s! Plover! Star! Tehk! tchk! Jerry! Together now, my beauties!' and with one mighty drag the coach stood on level ground again.

'Come along, sergeant,' I called to his back on the box-seat. 'I think it's a fair thing for a taste of "John Walker."'

Following on my words like an echo came a sharp, stern order from ahead of 'Bail up, there! Up with your hands! Quick!'

Then, on top of the driver's oath of dismay and astonishment as he raised his whip, I saw a streak of flame spurt out of the scrub and heard the report of a shot, followed instantly by two more from the box that made the startled horses plunge and rear all of a heap in their traces. Then Charlie, with a cry that came to my ears like a death-wail from the intense misery of it, leapt clean over the half-door. Across this I also scrambled the next minute to find him supporting a body in his arms, covering its face with kisses, and moaning, 'Oh Hetty! Hetty! And you promised you wouldn't—you promised you wouldn't!'

Close by stood the sergeant silently surveying the scene, his smoking revolver in one hand and his left arm hanging down in a curiously limp fashion.

'Will you please bring me one of the lamps, Mr Chesney?' he said, striving, as I could hear, to speak calmly. 'My arm is broken, and I wish to see who did it.'

'Oh Charlie!' exclaimed a voice that made me jump again as the light fell full on a beautiful pain-racked face and great staring black eyes,

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'Oh Charlie, I'm dying! It serves me right, too! But you—poor lad! No, never mind; it's no use,' as with frantic fingers he strove to unbutton the vest at a spot that showed already a big purple stain. 'Poor lad! poor lad!' she repeated as, putting up a hand, she gently stroked his cheek; 'I've ruined you, Charlie dear, and broken my promise—and I die.'

Her broad felt hat with a fringe of crape attached had fallen off, and a great mass of hair flowed in black waves over the lad's knees as he knelt supporting her head and shoulders, a world of agony in his smooth young face finding expression only in little inarticulate moans and choking noises—a spectacle that stirred my soul to tears as I turned aside.

Presently the sergeant spoke for the first time.

'Ask her where the money is, Mr Rolleston,' he said in low, cold tones, 'before it's too late.'

But Charlie never heeded. Esther, however, heard him, and, opening her eyes, made an effort to raise herself, saying as she glanced around, and with a faint return of her old manner, 'Why, it's Sergeant Devine! And the obliging Mr Chesney too! I never thought, sergeant, you could shoot so straight. Have you done for my brother also?'

'I think he got my second bullet,' replied Devine calmly. 'But he's not in sight just now. I'm sorry I shot you, Miss Flett. Still, you know, men and women dressed alike are much the same in the dark. If you are badly hurt—which I hope isn't the case—wouldn't it be as well to tell Mr Chesney where the money you stole last month is planted?'

For answer she looked up into the sergeant's hard set face with a mocking little smile on her own, from which, every now and then, Charlie so tenderly wiped the death-sweat. Then, as she half-turned and saw me kneeling, gazing at her with God knows what emotions of sorrow and pity and regret at work within me, and showing in my eyes, her hand feebly sought mine; and, obedient to a look, I knelt still lower and put my ear to her mouth, just catching a faint whisper of 'Under the big stone in the Koortani dining-room fireplace. Good-bye! Be good to poor Charlie.'

Then a convulsive tremor shook her frame, her head sank back again in the lad's arms, and a wild and wayward soul fluttered forth into the warm, close night.

'She's gone, Charlie, poor old chap!' I said as I spread a handkerchief over the calm white features and took the weight of the body out of his arms.

'Gone!' he replied vacantly as, without re-

sistance, he gave way to me and rose to his feet. 'Gone!' he repeated. 'Then I'll follow her.'

As he spoke he snatched the sergeant's revolver from his hand, clapped it to his head, and the next minute fell dead across the corpse of Esther Flett.

As the sergeant and I stood there, stunned at this fresh tragedy, the driver, who had sat all the time like a statue, uttering a cry of horror, brought the whip down on his horses and galloped away from us, never halting till he covered the five miles to the changing-stage, where he told such a tale as sent the two grooms racing thence along the road to look for us. And, that nothing should be wanting to complete the sad business, on the next morning the trackers found William Flett lying wounded to death a mile or two down the creek-bed, his horse feeding near him, and another one caught in a bush by his bridle not far away. This last was Esther's favourite, Nero; and around his legs were sewn four stockings of white stuff so neatly and closely as at night to simulate well enough such natural markings.

Under the great hearthstone at Koortani we found not only the money belonging to my own bank, but also that of the New Guinea people—every sovereign of it.

Since that time, however, the B.N.C. has never had a branch at Mooroobin. Not a man in the service but would sooner leave at a minute's notice than attempt to take charge of one.

I went there once after I was married; and before I left I visited the three graves that stand side by side in the open at the back of the township, fenced from straying goats and sheltered from the scorching heat by a clump of drooping *wilgas* that Devine, with much care and trouble, planted and fostered.

He is an inspector now, and long ago transferred to the capital; and frequently when I meet him we have a chat over old times. But of that midnight tragedy at Deep Creek we never speak. Once only I asked him a question.

'You remember the Chinaman?' he replied. 'Yes? Well, when he whispered to me that day at the thirty-five-mile stage he said, "One feller no man. One allee same girlee. Me feel the ling on fingah while she tie lope." The rest, of course, was simple guess-work. God knows I was sorry enough that it turned out so badly! I'd ha' cheerfully gone without a braided jacket if some other body had done the shooting. Still—well, you know,' he concluded after a long pause, 'perhaps it was better so for the three of them.'

And perhaps it was.

THE BEAUTY-MARK OF NURSE JONES.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS.

CHAPTER I.

SHE giggles,' Muir told me. 'A woman who giggles is a fool. I hate fools.' 'Poor thing!' I said, referring not to Muir, but to the object of his hatred; and, reaching up from the sofa on which I was having an after-dinner cigarette, I pulled down a couple of dictionaries. The first book, being a medical vocabulary, gave me no help. The second explained that to giggle is to laugh with short catches of the breath, or to titter. I then looked up 'titter,' and found, of course, that I was referred to 'giggle;' but I was also told that to titter was to 'laugh restrainedly,' which rather surprised me, for I thought that tittering was supposed to show lack of restraint.

I like precision, especially in accusation or argument, and I read these definitions to Muir, though with some difficulty on account of his impatient snorting.

'I might look up "fool" too,' I told him patiently; 'but I think I know pretty well what you mean.'

'If you don't,' he said, 'I needn't go far to find another illustration.'

'You underestimate your abilities,' I replied; 'I wouldn't call you a fool,' and then hurried on in somewhat louder tones, so that I really can't say what his answer was.

'If you accept "titter" as the equivalent of "giggle,"' I declared, 'and take it as meaning "to laugh restrainedly," I am prepared to dispute the matter with you. When Tommy Dodd lashed out and kicked that basin of corrosive over your legs this morning, Nurse Jones didn't laugh "restrainedly" at all. She shrieked hysterically.'

'Pretty discipline, when that sort of thing is allowed from a probationer in a hospital ward,' growled Muir.

'My dear boy,' I retorted, 'let me point out that you, by the merest accident of birth, as a virtuous democrat might say, are my junior here—some two years my junior, in fact. But this morning you were so kind as to criticise my method of dressing young Tommy's leg.'

'I only said I thought I could give you a tip.'

'Quite true; and I was quite ready to take it—wasn't I? Only, unfortunately, Tommy isn't used to your fingers, and spoilt the show. Nurse Jones evidently thought she saw some humour in Tommy.'

'She's a fool!' Muir repeated with double emphasis.

'She's a very nice-looking one, anyway,' I said contentedly. 'I think she's only a bit nervous.'

'Nervous! She's got the cheek of a golf-caddie;' and, it being his night off, Muir flung out of the room to get ready for a dance, only poking his head in again to say that, since his dancing-pumps looked rather shabby, he had borrowed mine, and wished I wouldn't wear them so tight. He's an inch or so taller than I am, and big in proportion; so I rose blessing him. But he slammed the door in my face, and the pumps, tight or no, didn't prevent him from clearing out of the place altogether before I could reach him.

That night, when I went my rounds through the wards of our little hospital, I found that the probationer was once more disregarding discipline. Tommy Dodd, from whose miserable little leg we expected to take a piece of dead bone in some few days, was fretful and feverish. Nurse Jones, who ought not to have been there, had switched on the light over his cot, and was swiftly drawing pigs for his comfort. Because she and the child together made a picture that was pleasant to look upon, I, wrongly, loitered in the shadow of the doorway and looked at them.

'There!' said Nurse Jones, giving a dig at the paper with her pencil. 'That's the great-grandfather of all pigs; and he's Irish, and there's his eye, Tommy. Now, that's thirteen pigs to the dozen that I promised you, so you're going to sleep like a good boy.'

'More!' said Tommy at once.

'Not a pig more,' Nurse Jones told him.

'What's his name?' asked Tommy, obviously to gain time. 'You've given all the rest names.'

'Oh, we'll call him what you like,' arranging the tumbled clothes over him.

'No; you choose.'

'Oh, well, he's Irish, you know,' said Nurse Jones, considering gravely, 'so we'll call him Patrick, or Dennis, or Terence'—

'Terence!' The imp caught at that. 'That's my doctor's name,' he reminded her—'Terence Connell.'

'Very well, then,' Nurse Jones agreed carelessly, 'Terence Connell it is; and a nice, fat, good-tempered Paddy of a pig he looks, too.'

At that moment a gurgling from the woman in the opposite bed made artist and critic look up together.

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'There's my doctor!' announced Tommy Dodd gravely, and held out the pigs for my inspection without the least shadow of guilt. But Nurse Jones, after a second of petrified dismay, fled down the ward. Whether or no the faint echo of a giggle came from among the shadows at the far end I cannot say. I only know that I could not make up my mind to assert my authority and call her back.

I myself switched off the light over Tommy Dodd's bed, after, at his urgent and loud request, signing my full name under the last pig. He then curled up happily with the thirteen porkers clutched in his fist under the pillow, while the woman in the next bed came perilously near suicide by cramming bedclothes to an extraordinary extent into her wide mouth, that I might not hear the laughter which set her bed creaking.

I saw the probationer no more that evening. The night-nurse presently hurried in, and explained that Nurse Jones's duties not being yet defined, she was doing odd jobs, and had been left alone in the ward for a few minutes while the night-nurse fetched something.

For some time after that evening things went on in much the same way as usual. Patients came—and went; some jubilant and unreasonably grateful, with fresh leases of life and fresh capacity for hope and fear; some silent and still, with that look of mysterious knowledge which the faces of the dead often suggest.

Muir and I worked together, ate together, and wrangled together. We made joint resolve to go to bed earlier, which we never accomplished; and whenever there was nothing and nobody else to discuss, we could always fall back upon the subject of Nurse Jones.

That young woman avoided me as much as possible ever after posing as an artist. Twice, meeting me in the corridors between the wards, she showed some hesitating wish to say something; but I am rather more nervous with strangers than you might suppose, and I always bolted past her with a nod, and some remark according to the time of day.

Muir, being in some ways extraordinarily juvenile, showed plainly that he had never forgiven her early insult to his dignity. I vainly tried to persuade him that this in itself was undignified. The memory rankled; and Nurse Jones, finding apparently that he would be censorious in any case, occasionally seemed to go somewhat out of her way to show how little she cared for his good opinion.

'She's a self-willed hussy,' Muir often informed me in the lazy evening-time between dinner and the night-round of the wards.

'Any time that you have to report Nurse Jones for any disobedience or neglect of her duties,' I always said in my best official tone, 'I will see that the matter is brought fully before the Board.'

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'Do you think I'm a heartless beast?' Muir once asked me hotly when I gave him my usual formula. 'Do you think I'm a Bounder? Do you think I want to injure the girl's prospects? I suppose a chap may have a growl if he likes.'

'Apparently he may,' I allowed. 'Whether or no you're a heartless beast, as you put it, I can't tell. I've found most men, including myself, are sometimes.'

'It's all very fine for you to play the cool philosopher,' he told me. 'She hasn't taken it into her head to poke silly fun at you behind your back;' whereat I grinned, remembering the thirteenth pig, and judging that Muir had not been told of the same.

I myself took a very friendly interest in Nurse Jones, though we never met except in professional relations. I was able to allow this—to Muir—the more freely because he knew I was engaged; though sometimes you would not have thought I had told him of my condition had you heard his apophthegms on love and marriage, with which he regaled me at times when I was too lazy to start a more interesting subject. It seemed to me sometimes that he gave such matters far too much of his lordly consideration, seeing that he voted them generally a folly and a failure.

'Early marriage especially,' said this aged philosopher one night, 'is a terrible mistake. So is an early engagement. It presupposes silliness or selfishness—probably both. The fellow who asks a girl to be engaged to him before he has a settled income of at least four hundred a year insults her, and is a scoundrel.'

Now, this little speech seemed to me to show an extraordinary want of tact, and I suppose it struck me the more forcibly because my own engagement often weighed upon my conscience.

'I am sorry,' I said politely, 'if I have deluded you into supposing I had four hundred a year.'

'You never did,' Muir allowed. 'What has that to do with it?'

'I believe I have told you of my engagement?' I said. 'But of course there is no reason why you should remember it.'

It was never easy to embarrass Muir; but he certainly did seem to feel that this time he had been a trifle inconsiderate.

'Of course there are cases,' he allowed vaguely. 'Still, I feel I must say, Connell, if you ask me'—

Now, I knew from experience that what Muir felt he must say was invariably something it was pleasanter not to hear.

'I don't ask you,' I pointed out, and plunged at once into my interrupted task of setting down some memoranda upon an obscure brain-lesion. But I confess that I did not forget these and similar axioms, nor did Muir.

Meanwhile Nurse Jones, though the Staff-nurse Morgan confided to me that she found

her 'a handful,' was a favourite with most of us, including her cases. Indeed the Staff herself owned to a weak fancy for her.

'Such a strong, willing creature she is,' said the Staff admiringly. 'Just look at her arms!' Nurse Jones had turned up her sleeves (quite against all precedent, I fancy) to do some bit of her work, and now her strong bare arms were wrapped round the convalescent Tommy Dodd. He was always her favourite, and I could fancy at times that I saw a sort of dumb challenge to me when I found her petting him, as though she defied the memory of the thirteenth pig to make her shift from Tommy's bedside again.

Just now I found myself speculating vaguely as to the appearance those round arms would present in other garb—say a ball or dinner dress.

'Does she dance?' I asked innocently, and did not notice my own question until the astonished glare of the Staff brought me to my senses.

'Does she dance attendance on Tommy too much?' I demanded, with a brave attempt at austerity; and the Staff, to all appearance somewhat relieved, said that she ought not to complain, for, whatever Nurse Jones might be doing, she was always ready to leave it, and to help anybody else who wanted help.

'All the same,' she told me, with her eyes fixed gloomily on the abundant reddish back-hair of Nurse Jones, who was now moving away swiftly down the ward with Tommy in her arms, 'I'm not sure that she'll stay long.'

'Why's that?' I asked, somewhat startled. 'Doesn't she like the work?'

'Like it!' sniffed Nurse Morgan contemptuously. 'Why, she's just *made* for it, Dr Connell—even if she *will* try to do things in her own way instead of ours. But she says that she can't stay where she doesn't give satisfaction. I tell her that's just a deceitful form of pride. *She* says it's self-respect;' and Nurse Morgan, who had emphasised every other word with both voice and gesture, bent down to smooth the already unwrinkled coverlet of an empty bed, and heaved a little sigh that somehow made me imagine she had said something which had been upon her mind for some time.

'Who's dissatisfied, if it's not you?' I asked. 'She doesn't fancy I've anything against her—does she?'

'No, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan allowed, eyeing a speckless glass basin with severity, and then picking it up to give it extra polish. 'No, it's not you. Though, if I might speak non-officially, you know, with the understanding that I was just speaking to *you*, you know, and not, as one might say, to the Senior Resident'—

'Oh, of course,' I agreed, though I could not think of Nurse Morgan as anything but official. 'I want a cup of tea, nurse, and yours always tastes better than ours. I suppose it's the way

you make it. If you can give me a cup in your room now, without too much trouble, you can tell me all about it.'

We went into Nurse Morgan's little sitting-room, just off the ward, and she moved quietly about and got out her tea-things. I sat in one of her basket-chairs, and stared, as I had often done before, at portraits of former visiting-physicians and surgeons and long-gone residents, and wondered secretly whether Nurse Morgan did not feel some kindly contempt for the ignorance of new-comers, and whether her stately respect for the residents was not often more official etiquette than anything else.

When I had begun to sip my tea, and had asked her, once more, exactly how long she thought it should stand, and whether she did not, really, get a higher-priced tea than we did, Nurse Morgan was as far non-official as she could be. So we returned to the matter of Nurse Jones.

'You said,' I reminded her, 'that she did not seem to suppose you or I was seriously dissatisfied with her?'

'No,' Nurse Morgan assured me, sipping her own tea critically, and then adding more cream; 'although I did understand, from what she said, that you might have complained when she came first, if you had chosen to do so. After all, she's only a girl, Dr Connell. We must make allowances.'

I assumed, to the best of my ability, the impartial mien of a patriarch. I put aside, with a wave of the hand, any idea of my having a personal grievance against the probationer.

'Only a girl,' I agreed benevolently, and refused to wonder how far Nurse Morgan might consider me past boyhood. By the way, I find that the interesting riddle, 'When is a girl no longer a girl?' is answered entirely according to the age of the person asked. I also find it to be a riddle with more tragedy in it than one might suppose; but that was no particular concern of Nurse Jones at that time. Probationers come earlier to our little hospital than to most others, and Nurse Jones's claim to be considered a girl was unquestionable. Indeed, I fancy she aspired to the appearance of a greater age than that which she rejoiced in.

'Any one of the cases complaining?' I asked, after consideration, and still unofficially.

'Not a word, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan assured me, and pursed her lips as though to let me know that, whatever the dangers of high pressure, nothing except an absolutely direct question would wring anything from her.

'Of course you always find Dr Muir considerate,' I told her, with an air of decision. I knew that Muir was far more afraid of Nurse Morgan than he would ever acknowledge himself to be of any one human.

'I do—always,' said Nurse Morgan with unnecessary emphasis.

'Ah, yes!' I said; and then, after further deliberation, 'He's young too, you know, nurse.'

'Just so, Dr Connell. That's just what I told Nurse Jones;' after which we silently agreed that the subject was as far thrashed out as was desirable, and I had a second cup of tea while Nurse Morgan favoured me with reminiscences.

I had very little time that evening for any chat with Muir, or even for consideration of whether I could chat at all with him on the subject of Nurse Jones. After all, if she chose to go she must do so. Her grievances against him could not be very great, or a formal complaint would have been made. Nurse Morgan would not stand by quietly to see any one of her assistants bullied. Muir and Nurse Jones were probably both a little too careful of their dignity; and Muir, being young, not quite sure of his position, and with no great sense of humour, would be the more likely to take offence at Nurse Jones's independence, and at any attempt on my part to act as peacemaker. As it was, I reminded him of my seniority as seldom as might be.

CHAPTER II.



IN any case, that night I was too busy to consider the matter. A countrywoman of mine, one Grace Sullivan, who had already been in one of the wards, sent begging me to call and see her—for the sake of Ould Ireland,' as she put it; and I went, doubting very much whether the 'distressful counthry' would profit greatly by my attendance, or by Mrs Sullivan's hoped-for restoration to health.

Reaching one of the poorest quarters of the town, I had more than once to step from the footway to avoid drunkards who—it being Saturday night—spread themselves regally over it, or tacked across like spirit-laden smuggler-craft beating up against the wind. But I steered clear of them all, and at last toiled up the filthy stair to Mrs Grace Sullivan's combined sitting and bed room—all the rest of her house being packed like a rabbit-warren with lodgers of the lowest type.

Having driven several good Samaritans, or curious idlers, out of the room, I proceeded to question and examine my patient, who alternately petitioned all the saints to bless me for coming, and cursed things in general, and sometimes me in particular, when I handled her.

'Two ribs and a collar-bone broken, Mrs Sullivan,' I said at last. 'Who did it?'

'Och! I had a fall, docthor dear.'

'Yes, so your messenger told me,' I allowed. 'But what made you fall? Were you drunk?'

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'An' it scarcely foive in the afternoon when it happened!' said Mrs Sullivan, greatly pained at the suggestion, although the black neck of a whisky-bottle poked out cheek by jowl with her head from under the pillow. 'No, I was not drunk, docthor dear. I'd hardly begun to drink, when Sullivan'—

She hesitated, and I finished her sentence for her. 'Knocked you down?' I suggested.

'I don't see, afther all,' said Mrs Sullivan, with as much *hauteur* as circumstances would permit—'I don't see, afther all, that the tratement of two ribs—an' a collar-bone—will be th' better for sich questions. Between man an' wife'—

'You're right,' I interrupted. 'I'll leave it between you and him and Father Munro; but I want to make sure of a quiet night for you, at any rate.'

'A quiet night, is it?' groaned Mrs Sullivan, rolling her head from side to side on the pillow. 'Wid him an' the company he kapes, how can I have that?'

'Turn them out,' I told her. 'The room's your own.'

"'Turn 'em out!' ses you," quoth Mrs Sullivan. 'It's just what Sullivan himself tells me. "Turn 'em out," he ses, "or they'll have me down." But, docthor dear, how can I turn out folks what I can't see, an' hopes I niver may see?'

I whistled softly. 'Oh, they aren't your lodgers, then?'

'Lodgers! They're more like landlords—from the lordly ways of 'em,' said Mrs Sullivan mysteriously, with a quick glance round. 'It's no rent *they'll* pay.' She turned her mouth to the whisky-bottle, and was drawing the cork with her teeth, when I took the bottle away.

'None of that,' I told her. 'Tell me about these folk your husband brings here. Who are they?'

'Divils!' said Mrs Sullivan abruptly.

'He's drinking hard, then. Is that it?'

She nodded fiercely at me. 'That's it. All day an' most all night. An' where he goes they go, he ses.'

'That can't last long,' I told her, with some grim idea of consolation.

'Can't it? It's lasted these six months. An' there's more of 'em every night, till where they find sittin'-room I can't think. He ses they're as thick as peas on the flure, an' he goes about pickin' his way like a cat, for fear of touchin' 'em. Else he sits still over there'—and she pointed to a seat in a dark corner—'an' he fends them off. Look!'—she pointed to a splash on the wall near her head, where some plaster had fallen away—'that's where the whisky-bottle struck two nights back. He said the Father of all Divils was makin' a long arm for 'im right acrost the flure, an' he flung the bottle in his face, shoutin' that 'twas holy wather.'

'Where is he now?'

'When he—when I fell he wint down the stair screechin' murder. He an' they'll be back soon enough.'

'You won't be afraid of them, anyway?' I said.

'Och! I don't know that,' she retorted, laughing uneasily. 'Folks ses 'tis just the drink, an' no doubt they're right. I'm an ignorant owld sowl anyways. But what if the drink jist opens the eyes of a man, an' makes him see what's always there?'

I did not feel competent to discuss that point at a moment's notice, and contented myself with issuing orders that Sullivan, if he returned that night, should be given a bed elsewhere.

It turned out, however, that I was to see more of Sullivan before long. But, first, other affairs had their turn; and for the time he passed from my thoughts altogether. When I reached the hospital I passed straight to my little side-room on the level of the Female Ward. I intended to make a round, and was shrugging myself into an old coat, when there came a tap at the door, and Nurse Morgan followed.

'Good-evening, nurse. Anything to report?'

I asked; and then, looking up, found myself confronted by a most tragic face.

'What's wrong?'

'It's happened, just as I said it would,' she told me, with a certain air of gloomy satisfaction.

'Good heavens! What?'

I tried to remember hurriedly which of the patients was likely to have taken a turn for the worse; but, as I tried to think of them all at the same time, the attempt was not a success.

'Quick, my dear woman!' I said. 'Am I too late?' And Nurse Morgan said she thought so.

'You *think* so,' I echoed angrily, catching up a hypodermic. 'Come away quickly! Who is it? What have you done?'

'I've done nothing, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan told me with dignity. 'I wash my hands of the whole affair.' And then, while I glared at her, thunder-struck at her coolness, 'They can settle it between themselves,' she added; and I suddenly had a suspicion of the truth.

'Pah!' I scoffed, putting down the hypodermic. 'Nurse Jones again, I suppose! Is that all?'

'Yes, that's all, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan answered, with an air of some severity. I don't think she was quite pleased at the flippant way in which I took the news. 'You won't be troubled with her much longer,' she added. 'She tells me that she means to give notice to-morrow morning.'

'Well,' I grumbled, 'if she can't make herself comfortable here, I suppose that's the best thing to do. It's not my business, nurse—anyway. The superintendent must settle it,' and I picked up my stethoscope and turned to leave the room.

Nurse Morgan stepped back to let me pass, but at the same time heaved such a sigh that I stopped, feeling a heartless brute.

'I suppose you want me to think it's Dr Muir,' I said plaintively; 'but, even if it is, what can I do? You know very well that if he has been unfair you've only to report it, and the thing will be dealt with. I can't believe he'd do anything really unfair, either.'

'Yes, it's Dr Muir,' Nurse Morgan said with sudden passion; 'and if I had my way with a boy like that, I'd'—

'Nurse!'

I was astounded at her fury—so astounded that I did not wait to hear what disciplinary treatment she would have suggested for Muir had she been in authority. My open consternation brought her to her senses. I saw the colour rise to her hair and then fade away, leaving the thin, rather angular face paler than usual, while the lower lip was nipped firmly under two large front teeth. We both stood silent for a moment, and I wondered vaguely when Nurse Morgan had blushed last, and felt guilty at having seen her now.

'The fuss must have upset me,' she said presently. 'I hope you'll forget my silly talk, doctor. I'll take a dose of bromide presently.'

'Do,' I told her. 'I'll prescribe for you, nurse. We must get on your nerves awfully sometimes. Now, let's see if I can help at all about Nurse Jones. What is all the fuss for?'

So Nurse Morgan, who was now suffering from reaction and on the verge of tears, let herself be coaxed into a chair and be dosed with a drachm of sal-volatile; after which she gave her account of the evening's performance.

It didn't amount to much when all was told. She was going round the ward with Muir when told of a visitor whom she wished to see. She had asked Muir to excuse her for a moment, and went away, leaving him to perform a minor operation, with Nurse Jones for his assistant. When she came back ten minutes later the mischief was done. Nurse Jones, who was proud of her skill in bandaging, had ventured to use a turn not absolutely orthodox. Muir had sniffed at it, and with elaborate politeness had suggested that 'while in this hospital' she might be so good as to carry out his directions.

Nurse Jones, with the smiling retort, 'That will not be for long. I shall give notice to-morrow,' had carefully unwound her bandage.

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'And she couldn't put it on again because she wanted to cry,' Nurse Morgan told me. 'And that—I mean Dr Muir—stood over her and laughed.'

'Laughed!' I said. 'Surely not.'

'Well'—Nurse Morgan considered, and then modified her statement. 'She said she was sure he must have laughed; it looked so foolish of her.'

'That's rather different,' I suggested. 'What next?'

'When I got back,' said Nurse Morgan tearfully, 'they had nearly finished the beds. They must have *raced*, Dr Connell. They went along with their noses in the air, like some of the visitors who come here, don't you know—and it was "nurse" this, and "doctor" that, all the way down. I *knew* things were all wrong, because they were so stiff and quite polite. Then Dr Muir went off without a word for anybody; and sometimes he'll set the ward screaming with his nonsense. Then I heard all about it.'

'What can I do, nurse?' I repeated. 'I'm sick of the whole business. After all, if they hate one another so much'—

'If!' Nurse Morgan repeated sarcastically after me. 'If!'

'Well, *since*, if you prefer it,' I told her with considerable impatience; but she was no better pleased.

'Supposing they don't hate one another at all?' she suggested, and, folding her hands in her lap, watched my astonishment with grim satisfaction.

'Nonsense!' I told her. 'If they don't hate one another, what does this cat-and-dog bickering go on for?'

This I thought was a poser; but Nurse Morgan only smiled in a sort of superior and melancholy manner, and shook her head with decision.

'There are so many little things, Dr Connell,' she told me; 'and, after all, if you'll excuse me for saying so, you're only a man. Now, I've seen your young lady's photograph in your room. She'd have understood it if she had seen half as much as you and I have. But then a woman *does* see things when it's not her own happiness that's concerned.'

'Thank you,' I snorted; 'and a man doesn't, I suppose? Now, look here, nurse'—

I was about to show Nurse Morgan how utterly unscientific and irrational this popular (feminine) theory was, when I was interrupted. There were alarms and excursions down about the Receiving-room, mixed with occasional yells and snatches of song.

'There's a Saturday-night case,' Nurse Morgan predicted; and presently the porter came for me, and I had to leave Nurse Morgan's absurd delusion to be demolished at some more convenient season.

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CHAPTER III.



N going into the Receiving-room with Muir, whom I met on the way, I found that Nurse Morgan had prophesied rightly. Tied down to a stretcher lay the cause of all the racket, now occupied in shouting, at the top of a shrill voice, his opinion of the two policemen who had brought him, and who stood by, stolidly amused.

The man's face was so swollen and blood-crusted that I did not recognise it until I had used warm water and a sponge freely—during which time I also was classified as one of his 'destroyers.' Before I had finished, however, I found that I was operating upon the bullet-head and snub-nose of an old acquaintance, Micky Sullivan, the husband of the woman I had seen that evening.

'How did this happen?' I asked his convoy.

'He was offerin' to fight the shreet and the pollis,' explained the sergeant, an Ulster man. 'It's lucky for himself,' he added philosophically, 'that Micky wears a Connemara head on him, as I've heard 'im say before, for he fell under the wheel uv a thrap, an' nothin' but a Connemara head wud 'ave stud it.'

I felt carefully over the 'Connemara head,' but found no trace of serious injury.

'Maybe it's the wheel that's the worse!' suggested the younger policeman, with a broad grin at his own sparkling wit.

'We'll keep him here for the night, though,' I decided. 'I know he has been drinking hard, and there's no telling how things may turn out with him.'

I decided this the more quickly because by this time Sullivan had drifted into maudlin tears, and was calling upon his 'darlin' Gracie' to help him against the Powers of Darkness; and I wanted to be sure that she had nothing of his society until he was sober and I had seen her again.

So Sullivan was packed off to Side-room No. 2, secured to the bed until his sleeping-draught should have had time to act; and Nurse Jones, who somehow always seemed available for emergencies, mounted guard, with the understanding that presently a man would take her place.

What followed was never thoroughly accounted for. Muir volunteered no explanation, and I decided not to ask for one. This, however, is what I know. Sullivan having been attended to, and Nurse Jones having settled down near him, with a watchful eye upon his antics, I went off to get some supper; and Muir left me with a promise that he would give a look at the man again before going to bed. That, I imagined, meant somewhere about

two hours later—for we of the medical staff did not keep early hours.

My theory is that Muir's conscience began to give him a bad time for his treatment of Nurse Jones. I'm sorry if what I have said of him gives the impression that he was an unmannerly cub. He really wasn't at all. But he thought a good deal more of his own dignity and position than the rest of us could; and I fancy now that he had started with a particular desire to impress the fascinating Nurse Jones, and was proportionately offended when he found that she did not seem to take him as seriously as a lowly probationer should, if she be wise, take a newly-capped medical.

Now, Nurse Morgan took care that evening to let him know, without any comment except such as is expressed by pursed lips and telegraphic curttness of speech, that our probationer meant to leave. That may be the reason why Muir strolled into Side-room No. 2 less than half-an-hour after he left me.

Upon his entry, according to Nurse Jones, Micky, who had been lying quite quiet, with his eyes shut, 'plotting'—so she fancied—became frantic. He begged Nurse Jones to observe that this was the Evil One come to take him at last. When she tried to soothe him, he wanted to argue the matter in detail; and he pointed out such characteristics in their visitor as he thought were convincing proofs of his origin, begging her especially to notice 'th' ugly black scowl of 'im!'

Now, Muir was scowling a little, it being perhaps difficult for a young and self-conscious man to stand and look pleasant while various possible slight personal defects are being enumerated by a sharp Irish tongue to a lady with a sense of humour.

On being requested to look particularly at the 'ugly black scowl' she confesses that she may have laughed, which probably made poor Muir feel it needful to assert his authority.

'Lie quiet, and don't talk nonsense!' he told Micky, stepping a little nearer to the bed; and Micky, either because he was out of breath or because he thought it safest, lay quiet, and probably looked very small and harmless.

'This isn't hurting you, is it?' Muir asked him, with a finger on the webbing; and at this point Nurse Jones acted foolishly, as she afterwards confessed, with tears, to Nurse Morgan.

'Oh, don't touch that, please!' she hurriedly entreated Muir. 'It mustn't be taken off until there's a man here.'

She became hysterical afterwards in Nurse Morgan's room when she reached this point of her story.

'A man!'

Muir bent and began to loosen the buckles one after another, talking as he did so.

'If you are nervous, nurse,' he explained,

'you may leave your patient to me. I will do my best with him until—as you say—a man comes;' and the last buckle was loosened, while Nurse Jones stood tongue-tied. 'Where we show confidence we gain trust,' Muir went on; and took his eyes off the bed, probably to cast a more or less dignified glance at his audience.

'Ye divil!' was Micky Sullivan's comment; and, snatching at the chair by his bedside, he bowled over the rash theorist.

When, warned by a shriek of Nurse Jones and a continued yell from Micky Sullivan, I hurried to Side-room No. 2, closely followed by the porter, things were decidedly lively. On the floor lay the victim to the confidence-trick, stunned and bleeding profusely from the nose. Half in, half out of bed, Micky Sullivan brandished a fragment of a broken chair in vain efforts to get another swipe at the unlucky looser of his bonds. He was only prevented by Nurse Jones, who, having caught him from behind by the left wrist, had pulled his arm backward between the bars at the bed-head. She was now hauling lustily, having gained a cunning purchase, and left Micky to do the yelling, though little broken giggles came between her clenched teeth.

Just as we dashed in Micky seemed to realise what it was that kept him pinned. He turned, and, aiming an awkward blow at Nurse Jones over his shoulder, sent her reeling against the wall.

CHAPTER IV.



HALF-AN-HOUR later, when Micky had dropped off to sleep, with 'a man' to watch him, and when Muir had begun to show some confused wish to know where he was and what had happened, I went to Nurse Morgan's room, and put the finishing touches upon the fairly deep cut above Nurse Jones's left eye.

'The scar,' I promised her, 'shall be just as small as a scar can be, nurse. I'm glad to find that you've kept quite cool with it all. Now, you had better be off to bed, and let me see you in the morning before you get up.'

'Nurse Jones is on night-duty, doctor,' Nurse Morgan reminded me—rather sharply, I thought.

'Was,' I suggested mildly. 'We mustn't let her run any risks.'

'Are there any?' demanded Nurse Morgan.

'Oh, I hope not,' I admitted. 'Still, she had a shaking, you know, and deserves a rest.'

'Of all the unfeeling creatures,' I told myself privately, 'give me a woman to beat the record. And of all women!'

'We're short-handed, you know,' Nurse Morgan persisted.

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'We always are,' I snapped.

'And some one has got to watch Dr Muir,' she went on, frowning sternly at me over Nurse Jones's shoulder. 'I really don't know who else can be spared to do it.'

'Oh, in that case'—— I said feebly; and Nurse Jones went with, at any rate, the side of her face next to me showing a remarkably fine colour.

I imagine that from that date a better understanding arose between the probationer and the Junior Resident. I know that twice, in supporting theories of treatment which the young woman put forward at the little nurses' clinics held by me, she declared, 'Dr Muir says so,' and seemed to think that final. I also know that Muir, after he got over a pretty severe concussion, and before I let him up, found that the holding of skeins of Berlin-wool for the probationer to wind was an extraordinarily exciting occupation, and one which never palled.

As for Nurse Morgan, she clothed herself, as with a garment of homespun, in a mixture of triumph and mystery that excited much wonder and comment in the Female Ward. I noticed, too, that when she met Nurse Jones there were little passages of endearment, which one might imagine showed a slackening of discipline and something terribly like favouritism.

Of all this, however, I made no remark, but waited. I was obliged to put up with a great deal of temper from Muir while he was kept on his back, and did not feel it safe to retaliate. When, however, he had been a couple of days on the sofa in our common sitting-room—where he lay and smiled idiotically at a set of hospital regulations—I felt justified in working off a little of the irritable feeling due, perhaps, to double-duty and want of exercise. I sat down by the couch after dinner that night, and drew his attention gently from the hospital regulations.

'I have an apology to make to you,' I told him. Now, this was a perfectly simple statement, and I don't see that Muir was justified in regarding me with suspicion, as he immediately did.

'What for?' he asked shortly.

'I'm afraid,' I said, 'that you've had a considerably uncomfortable time lately.'

'Pray don't apologise!' he told me, with a fatuous grin at the regulations.

'Oh, but I must,' I insisted. 'You must have had an awful time, with no one but that Nurse Jones to wait upon you. But you know I couldn't very well say how much I knew you hated the girl. Anyway, it's over now.'

'Yes, it's over now,' he agreed, with another grin, which turned into a huge sigh—of relief, doubtless.

'She'll be going out, I suppose, before you're in the wards again,' I said consolingly. 'I understand that she spoke of going just the very 1899.]

evening, as it happened, that Sullivan went for you.'

'I was a brute,' said Muir, with conviction.

'Really?' I asked innocently. 'I never heard, you know—Sullivan made no complaint.' 'Sullivan!'

Muir turned to glare at me, and then jerked round on the couch again.

'You're an awful ass!' he said, with fine compassion.

'I dare say,' I agreed philosophically. 'By the way, Nurse Jones was giggling when we came in upon the three of you that night.'

'She's a hero,' Muir announced hurriedly.

'Nonsense, my dear fellow. Heroine, you mean, if you mean anything,' I suggested, with a finger on his pulse. 'She only did her duty, you know. She had charge of the case. I think she giggles worse than ever. I heard her only to-day from my room. If she were not leaving I really should have to speak to her about the silly habit. It begins to annoy me as much as it does you.'

The grunt that Muir gave as his only answer was hardly intelligible; but I accepted it, and said 'Quite so' cheerfully.

'You said just now that I was an ass,' I went on presently. 'I quite agree with you. Somehow I've often been reminded, during the last few days, of what you told me not long ago. I'm afraid you're right. I'm afraid I'm worse than an ass.'

'Oh, I don't know,' Muir stammered apologetically. 'I say what I think sometimes without thinking.' This seemed to suggest a curious psychological question; but I let it pass.

'Oh, I dare say you were right; and I shan't forget it,' I told him with humility.

'Well, a fellow's friendship isn't worth having,' Muir allowed, 'if he hasn't the pluck to say disagreeable things sometimes. A fellow can't always be sure that they'll be taken as they're meant, though. I'd speak oftener if I thought I'd be understood. What was it I said that you've come to believe in?'

He was interested now. Appreciation of one's wisdom, especially by any one slightly one's senior, is always pleasant, I imagine. He twisted round upon the sofa to face me; and I gave him time, so that he might lose nothing of his own treasured words.

'You said,' I told him slowly, and as if repeating a well-learned lesson—'you said, "Early marriage is a terrible mistake. So is an early engagement. It presupposes silliness or selfishness—probably both. The fellow who asks a girl to be engaged to him before he has a settled income of at least four hundred a year insults her, and is a scoundrel." By-the-by, you should get to bed soon; your pulse is about a hundred.'

I then left the room, and a sofa-cushion, which just missed my head in the doorway,

convinced me that my appreciative quotations had been taken in the spirit which I intended.

My good humour was renewed by the sight of Nurse Jones in the little side-room, where I went for a chart. She was about to go, when I looked up from the table and asked her to wait a moment.

'I wish to congratulate you, nurse,' I told her slowly—'on being rid of a very troublesome patient.'

Nurse Jones blushed scarlet, and murmured something about taking cases as they came.

'Quite so,' I agreed. 'I know you made the best of it. Since it is no secret that you are going, nurse, one feels that discipline need not be so carefully considered. I wish to apologise to you for the task which has been put upon you lately. Dr Muir is my friend; therefore, I am quite aware of his failings, and know that you must have had a great deal to put up with. I consider myself justified in telling you—since you are, I understand, about to leave—that I feel his behaviour to you before his accident was quite unwarranted.'

At this point Nurse Jones began an anxious search in the nearest drawer for something apparently so minute that her head was plunged almost out of sight.

'I have told Dr Muir what I think of it,' I went on magisterially.

Nurse Jones's head reappeared sharply, and she faced round to stare fixedly at me, her face still flushed, and her hair ornamented with sundry small pieces of cotton-wool and two safety-pins.

'What did you tell him?' she demanded, and I emphasised my accusations carefully by pencil-taps upon the table.

'I told him,' I declared, 'that his conduct had been inconsiderate, ungentlemanly'—I hesitated, she eyed me so intently.

'Go on, please,' said she, leaning forward a little, with both hands on the opposite side of the table.

'Cruel, disrespectful,' I added; but got no further, for the lady I had championed raised a firm hand and dealt me a ringing box on the ear, collapsing into a chair immediately after, whence she stared at me dumbly with mixed terror and defiance.

I confess that I was mentally as well as physically staggered. I dare say, on consideration, that I have sometimes deserved to have my ears boxed. But I cannot recollect that it had

happened before this occasion. It would have been a relief to rub the side of my head; but dignity—such as I had left—prevented me from doing so. I sat and tried to consider the situation carefully, while I listened to the respiration of Nurse Jones, which was irregular, and, I imagined, symptomatic of her mental condition. Then, because I could not help it, I began to laugh.

'It's a good thing that you're lighter-handed in the wards,' I told her. 'But I don't think I got more than I deserved. I want your help in dressing the hip-case. Shall we go round?'

As Nurse Jones silently rose, and stood aside for me to pass out, I noticed the deep red of the fresh scar above her eye, showing out against a face from which most of the colour had gone. It was not, however, until Tommy Dodd commented upon it that I knew my own face was marked. He announced loudly to the ward that his doctor's face was red on one side, and he asked persistently whether Nurse Jones had poulticed it, as she sometimes poulticed his leg.

Nurse Jones fled in confusion just as Muir wandered in. Muir, being still on the sick-list, had no right to be there, and I said so; and I did not think much of the feeble explanation that he gave, to the effect that he had been anxious to see how everything was going on.

'Jove! your face is scarlet on one side!' he agreed when the eager Tommy Dodd drew his attention to it. 'Has it been next the fire—or what?'

'I think it was due to heat,' I acknowledged feebly, as Nurse Morgan, unconsciously cruel, bustled up Nurse Jones with a tray of dressings.

'It's as red,' squeaked the incorrigible Tommy, 'as the ugly red mark on top of Nurse Jones's eye. What's that, Dr Muir?'

'That's Nurse Jones's beauty-mark,' Muir told him, with a stare that defied me to contradict.

'Is Dr Connell's a beauty-mark too?' piped Tommy.

'Mine is the mark of beauty,' I said politely.

Muir (who has for some time been settled in the north) now declares that his wife never giggles; otherwise I should have been ready to swear that her shoulders shook with the most innocent of giggles at that moment.



THE VISION AT THE MENHIR.

By E. J. ROCKE SURRAGE.



YVES PENGAVEREC was ill at heart.

It was but an hour ago that old Mathurin, his foster-father, had dispelled the dream-cloud which had hovered like a glorious nimbus about the young man's head for close on three years past. Ay, and had dispelled it roughly enough, too—the grim, sour old man—without a trace of tenderness or remorse, with only a crease of amusement across his withered chops and a cackle of anger rising in his shrill voice.

‘What! Thee marry Anne?’ he had rasped. ‘Go on with thy work, my son, and blow thyself sober. The cider has been too strong for thee. Thee marry Anne? Why, she’s but a chick; and thee—thee a great hulking loon that is indebted to me for every morsel of rye-bread that goes into thy great mouth!—thee that I have reared out of charity, only at the bidding of my sainted wife—the Blessed Virgin be her helper! Thee marry Anne? Show me thy pouch with twenty gold pieces in its bottom, and I will say ay; but—till then. Go on with thy hoeing, lad, and talk sense.’ And so the old man had hobbled off down the sun-browned slope of the field, tittering.

It was a cruel blow to Yves Pengaverec. It shattered his hopes, his happiness, his very life and reason—so thought the swarthy, wild-eyed young peasant as he clutched his strong hands on the top of the well-used hoe, and dug his chin into the knuckles of them. It was unjust, mean, brutal. And yet it was so true.

What was he—an alien, a nameless stranger, whose very face betrayed him no true Breton, but a native of the South—what was he, to look up to Anne Pengaverec, the daughter of the wealthiest peasant in all the valley of Polniac? Ay, the wealthiest; for had not Mathurin Pengaverec two broad fields of rye, and a cow of his own on the common pasturage, and a cottage of hewn granite, when none of the others dwelt in more than hovels of baked mud? Yet this same Mathurin had adopted him almost as a son, and had reared him, when he might have suffered him to starve and become food for the kites on the desolate *landes*. There was gratitude due for that, to be sure; though the old man need not have blurted it so coarsely.

It was twenty years ago that it had happened; but Yves had not forgotten. Twenty years ago in this very month of September 1899.]

Mathurin Pengaverec—then a middle-aged widower, with his young wife but one week buried in the little hillside cemetery of the chapel of St Gildas—had been tramping home from the market at Pontivy with his baskets over his arm, and his thoughts running on the little month-old baby girl whom he had left with a neighbour that morning when he started for Pontivy; and he had turned aside, as the harvest-moon crept over the edge of the *lande*, to do a reverence at the foot of the crucifix which surmounted the lonely *menhir* on the crest of the heath—the great granite *menhir* that had once been a heathen giant, so they said, whom St Gildas himself had stricken into stone with that token of Christendom on his brow. And as Mathurin Pengaverec had drawn nearer to the *menhir*, he had seen a figure, which he took to be one of the market-women, prostrated at the foot of the stone; but the figure never stirred. Then he saw that the clothing was not that of a Bretonne; and he had touched the arms that were clasped around the rough stone, and they were cold and stiff; and the dusky face—the dusky, rounded face of a Southern woman—was rigid in death. And beneath the crouching figure, laid, as it were, in the shelter of the crucifix, sprawled a sturdy four-year-old boy, whimpering in a strange tongue.

Mathurin Pengaverec was a God-fearing man. He had led the frightened child back to Polniac, and made a comfortable bed of straw for him in the shed where the cow lay. And on the morrow the neighbours had set forth, and buried the body of the stranger woman—the wandering outcast of whose faith and origin naught was known—decently at the foot of the great granite *menhir* in the midst of the *landes*. And there their care had ended. But in the night a vision had come to Mathurin Pengaverec. His dead wife had appeared to him and bidden him bring up the boy as his own, to be a brother to the motherless babe Anne; and Mathurin had obeyed the bidding unquestioningly, though his inner self grumbled.

It had not turned out such a bad business for him after all, he had confessed later on. The little mother had been right; a second pair of hands was not amiss in the fields. And so the boy had grown up, and fallen in with Breton ways and the Breton tongue, and been endowed by common assent with the name of Yves Pengaverec—his own being unknown.

Of late, as years and stiffness had crept over the older man, the harder part of the field-work had fallen to the lot of Yves, and he had bargained for a wage; but Mathurin was grown close and grumbling with age, and the wage was pitifully small.

Twenty good gold pieces in his pouch, had he said? Blessed Mary! how was that to be done? Two golden napoleons, indeed, he had had—scraped and starved and hoarded out of his meagre pay—until the Pardon of St Gildas last gone; and then one of the twain had melted away. There had been a kerchief for Anne, that she might go smart on the fête-day, and a taper to be burned at the shrine of the good saint in memory of his mother, and a new felt hat—broad and sweeping enough to strike defeat into the hearts of all the other lads—for himself. And so there was but one gold piece left. Nineteen more to be got before he could have Anne! Merciful Father! How?

And Anne—smiling, teasing, tantalising Anne! Would she wait? Would she wait until the gray began to come in her tossing black hair, and the crow's-feet lined her soft cheeks, and the passing-by of years had dulled the ardour of his wooing? Would she wait while he hoarded together these accursed nineteen napoleons? Or would she give herself to another? The tyrant, the worse than tyrant, to make this cruel condition!—this condition that he knew to be hopeless, impossible. A tyrant, look you, whom he had worked for all these years with all his strength, like a slave! But he would work no longer.

The Southern birth-passions of Yves Pengaverec had come uppermost. His body shook; he gnawed fiercely at the knuckles of his hands as they lay clenched on the handle of the hoe; his eyes sparkled with a quick anger. He would get the cursed money—somehow; and then he would come back and claim Anne from the old man. And meantime, away with this slow-coach work! He must think—think; and there was nothing like a cup of cider to think upon.

Yves flung down his tool, and strode unsteadily across the scorched stubble-field. He leaped over the high mud-fence into the sunken cart-rut which formed the only highway through the valley of Polniac, and descended its rugged length. At the bottom—close to the spot where the tumbling Scorff, dwindled by the drought, crawled beneath a rude stone bridge—stood the old *auberge* 'Aux Chouans,' the crazy hovel that sufficed to dispense refreshment to man and beast in the remote valley of Polniac. A couple of unkempt fellows were sprawling on the wooden bench before the house; and they growled a surly greeting as Yves stumbled to the bench beside them and called for a cup of cider.

This cider was capital. It put heart into a man, and courage, and wits. Only nineteen napoleons, after all. 'Twas not much. And

then—Anne! But how to get them? One must think—think—think. Another cup of cider and the thought will come.

The sharp-visaged, slatternly landlady put the second cup of cider in his hands; and then she paused.

'Tis not often we see thee here, Yves Pengaverec,' she commented.

He grunted something, and took a deep draught.

'I suppose a night's trudge across the *landes* would not be to thy liking?' the woman continued hesitatingly. 'A courting-walk with thy maid is all you young men can think on.'

He looked up sharply, and asked her what she meant.

'It will mean money in thy pocket,' she nodded shrewdly.

'Ah!'

'Tis nothing but a jaunt to Loudéac or so,' she explained; 'and the pay will be for thee to fix. A traveller—an English sea-going man from the coast, wandered from his road—called here but an hour ago with his horse foundered. He had ridden it as if our Breton lanes were the Royal Road itself—the fool! He must needs get to Loudéac, says he, in time for the morning's diligence; and, as there be no horses here at his disposal, he must take a guide. See you?'

'And he will pay?'

'Aha, my child!—he will pay. He is but now in the guest-room, swilling wine like cider and throwing about his gold pieces as if he were made of them.'

'I will go, my mother.'

The chance had not been long in coming. He knew that it would not be long. He would get a whole napoleon, perhaps—perhaps two—for his night's work; a mere tramp of forty kilometres across the *landes*, little more than the journey to Pontivy on market-day. Why, this was something better than the slave's work which he had been used to doing!

'Best have an eye to the weather, mate; there's a pretty storm brewing.' This from the rougher of the two peasants on the bench beside him, growling and pointing to the evening sky.

The woman turned upon him fiercely.

'Hold thy tongue, Daoulaz!' she screamed. 'I dare say the job would have fitted thee better—eh? 'Tis likely I would have asked an ugly fellow like thee—is it not? Why, the stranger would have had his weasand slit, I reckon, 'fore ever he came out of the Fairies' Wood! I know thee, Daoulaz—but little to thy credit.'

The man laughed hoarsely; and the landlady, eyeing him with disfavour, passed into the *auberge*.

Yves sat indifferent, the half-emptied mug on his knee, his crowding thoughts running a steeplechase through his brain. Two napoleons for a night's work. Ay, the traveller could well afford as much—a man who could throw

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about gold pieces like that! Two napoleons was none too much for the job—no, nor yet three, if you came to think of it. And then there would be but sixteen to make. But sixteen—between him and Anne! The gentleman should pay him as a gentleman should; or, by St Gildas, he would wring it out of him! The *landes* were wide; he had but to lose his way, and the gentleman would pay him well enough to find it.

Yves drained his mug with a loud laugh, and called to the landlady for the reckoning.

She came out to the doorway, followed by a man—a short, thick-set man, dressed like a seaman. He rolled across to the bench where Yves sat brooding, and slapped him on the back.

'So you're to be the lad that's to pilot me across country—eh?' he roared. 'Well, we must look spry, my man; no missing the diligence for me. But another bottle of Bordeaux won't hurt us before we start. Here, mother, another bottle!—and of the best, mind ye.'

The red wine, vile as it was, was a novelty to Yves Pengaverec. It ran through his veins like fire, set his blood tingling and leaping, chased the thoughts in a wild scrambled throng through his brain. The stranger filled his glass once more with a liberal hand.

'No fear of me as paymaster, my lad!' he shouted jovially. 'I'll treat ye well. See here!' He hauled a leather bag from his pocket, loosened the string, and poured its contents—a jingling, glittering shower of gold—into the hollow of his other hand. 'We're but just paid off at Lorient,' he chuckled; 'and there's more where that came from.'

Yves sat transfixed. His eyes glistened and sparkled as they fixed themselves on the glimmering pile. His hand clenched itself convulsively around the glass in which the red wine swam. His head craned forward eagerly. The stranger poured back the money with a careless jerk into the leather pouch; and Yves's face fell. A scowl, black and savage, came between his eyes; but his face was bent so low that the stranger could not see it.

But one there was on the opposite side of the way who saw and noted it. A group of girls, brave in clean white caps and bright-hued fête-day dresses, loitered on the old stone bridge. It was the Feast of St Mathieu; and the vespers-bell of the little chapel of St Gildas, higher up the valley-side, was already tinkling. The girls strolled on, chattering lightly. But there was one among them on whom the eye of Yves Pengaverec had never before failed to fall, to whose side he had never before failed to saunter; and she had seen that look. And her heart grew suddenly cold and fearful.

The red wine was drained—that bottle and another—to the last drop. Yves's head swam; his hand shook beneath the weight of the traveller's valise; his legs almost failed him as

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they two set out upon their way. But his thoughts were busy.

The sun was sinking in an angry purple sky as they crossed the trickling Scorff and mounted the track that led out of the valley of Polniac upon the open *landes*. The solemn melody of the vesper-psalm reached their ears as they passed the hillside chapel. Yves Pengaverec crossed himself devoutly and shivered a little; but his brow was as black as the western sky.

Not through the Coët ar Groach—the haunted Fairies' Wood—that lay dark and mysterious on the hillside above them. Not through there, though that was the nearest way. Yves recalled the bitter words that the woman at the *auberge* had spoken to Daoulaz, and they sounded in his ears like a hideous forewarning. Not through there. Rather keep to the track right up the valley—though it were a mile farther—than pass through there.

He did not mean to harm the man—no, no! But he would have a share of those golden napoleons that the stranger knew so ill how to take care of—a share that he could carry to the old man Mathurin when he asked him again for the hand of Anne. He would have a share of them—by fair asking, if it could be so. And if the stranger would not yield them up, why, then—Yves scanned with lowered eyelids the sturdy bulk of the man who trudged by his side, and compared it critically with his own wiry build; and a grim smile passed over his lips.

The stranger tramped on all-unheeding, noisily familiar. The silent, glowering figure strode at his side. And so they passed up the valley and out on the bare *landes*.

Darkness was falling around them—darkness that gathered no illumination from the cloud-muffled sky. The desolate heath stretched out before, vague, gloomy, illimitable. No flutter of air passed over the great solitude; no cry of bird or beast broke into the night; a vast ineffable stillness lay heavy upon all the world.

Yves Pengaverec's conscience stirred uneasily. A vague sense of awe weighed upon him. There was something unearthly in this intense hush. He tried to whistle; he urged his companion to sing; but the sounds died away in their throats, and they strode on together in silence.

Big drops of rain began to fall with a splash on the crisp heather. The night grew blacker and blacker still, till he could scarcely see the figure of the man who walked but an arm's-length from his side. But an arm's-length! He had but to stretch out his arm and grapple with him, and the leather pouch—But no! Ten thousand times, no! Not there. Wait till they had passed the great *menhir* on the heath, where Mathurin had found him that night twenty years ago, where his dead mother lay buried. Mother of Mercy! not till they

were past that! The drops of sweat stood upon his brow at the thought.

Of a sudden a blinding flash, flickering, lambent, swept across the sky; a crashing peal of thunder burst above their heads; and at the same instant, as if set loose by the sound, a cataract of rain descended. The storm that Daoulaz had predicted had come.

Hissing and seething and spluttering, the torrent streamed down. No pause, no change, no intermission. The thunder rolled and clattered incessantly. The lightning leapt and flickered over the face of the heath. Tongues of flame, blue-tinged, quivering, lit on the trembling heather and shed a ghastly fitful glare over the solitude. The deep stillness had given place to a very hell of discord.

Yves's superstitious terrors gripped him closer, and his blood stood still. Was this tempest by chance a sign, a portent, a divine warning? Was he to be consumed by the wrath from above, devoured by some celestial messenger of vengeance, with that sin—that sinful design of his—unshriven upon his soul? He was a Breton by training if not by birth, with all the Breton beliefs grown deep-rooted in his brain; and his nature fought stoutly with the mocking hardihood which the red wine had engendered in him. But the red wine conquered. Bah! The storm was nothing; it had been expected all day; it was usual at the time of year. And he meant no harm to the man. Storm or no, he would have his share of the money—once they were past the *menhir*.

They could not be far from it now. With lowered heads and bent shoulders they were gaining the crest of the heath, where the *menhir* for centuries unknown had kept its solitary watch. A flash of dazzling brilliance zigzagged down the sky and irradiated the sombre plain. Ah! there it was in front of them—black and massive and irregular, with the tall crucifix on its summit in outline against the sky. Another flash, and another; and they could see it quite distinctly.

Stay! What was that? The flash had fallen on something pale at the foot of the stone. Was it— Or was it but his fancy? Yves's knees shook; the sweat started, cold and clammy, upon his brow; the flesh along the ridge of his back shuddered and crept. He waited for the next flash, his dry lips muttering a prayer. The flash was long in coming. There was a lull in the tempest; the rain abated, the heavens remained black. Then all at once the fury of the storm burst out upon them once more. Flash followed flash; the plain was lit with a thousand flickering sheets of fire; the thunder rolled like some avenging spirit. And he saw.

They were but thirty yards from the base of

the great *menhir*, and the lightning-flashes lit it with a fierce, changing intensity. A woman's shape stood outlined against the stone, her arms thrown around it, her face turned from the travellers. It was no mistake, no illusion, no deception of the eyesight; the steely, quivering light played around the pale-robed figure and illumined it in keen contrast with the darkness of the granite. A woman's figure clung there, sure enough. And *whose?* *Whose?* The prayer would not come now. It had died away upon his nerveless lips, and his tongue groped for it in vain. He could only watch—watch—watch, with starting eyeballs and fluttering breath. Then, as he still stood gazing, horror-stricken, paralysed by a growing awe, the figure seemed of a sudden to turn and beckon to him; and in a lull of the thunder-rattle there came a long wail floating upon the storm, calling the name of Yves Pengaverec.

He stayed no longer. With outstretched arms, praying, supplicating, groaning, in a very ecstasy of supernatural fear, he ran blindly forward. He ran blindly forward, with that glorious shining figure standing in miraculous radiance before his eyes, and cast himself at its feet, sobbing passionately.

Yves Pengaverec is an aged man now; and he and his old wife Anne, faithful companion of his long life-voyage, are content to look forward with patient eyes to the time, not far distant surely, when they shall both be laid to rest in the quiet hillside cemetery at the back of the old chapel of St Gildas. Fortune has done well by them. From the day when old Mathurin, stricken down by a sudden paralysis, promised his daughter in marriage to the penniless young peasant who was willing to work the fields for him, till now—when modern usages begin to interfere sadly with the primitive husbandry of La Basse Bretagne—the world has prospered with them. They are hale yet, and frosty-cheeked, and cheery. And the old couple will speak sometimes still of that terrible night when Anne, frightened by the look in her lover's eyes, had slipped away from the rest when vespers were done, and had fled through the Fairies' Wood and out upon the *landes*, hoping vaguely to overtake and speak with him; of how the storm, remembered to this day, had come upon her just as she reached the great *menhir*; and how the travellers, toiling round by the longer road, had appeared like a providence to save her in her need. But there is ever yet a secret which Yves Pengaverec will bear with him to the grave. His lips have never breathed word of the strange mistake that he made that night, or of the dark sin that his soul was saved from by that miraculous vision at the *menhir*.

THE HIDDEN PRINCESS.

By TOM GALLON, Author of *Tatterley, Comethup, &c*

CHAPTER I.

THE MURDER OF THE KING.

IN those days known as the 'good old times'—or the bad old times—there existed, somewhere near the south-west of Europe, a certain kingdom known as Sylvania. You will find no trace of it on any map, new or old; it has long since been swallowed up and parcelled out among the great countries upon whose borders it once flourished. It was a thriving country, and a prosperous; and the name of its capital was Arboream—a strange, old-world city, with crooked, ill-paved streets, and queer overhanging houses which seemed to be for ever thrusting their heads against each other to whisper strange things by the light of the moon.

At the time of which this faithful history speaks there was a certain King upon the throne of Sylvania, known as Ulphius—an old and kindly man, beloved by his people—a gentle and wise ruler; his Queen had died years before, leaving behind her an only daughter. This daughter the King, out of love for his country, had named Sylvia; she had grown up from girlhood to young womanhood—riding out through the streets of the old city by her father's side, attended by the courtiers and ladies-in-waiting—the fairest girl in a country noted for the beauty of its women. She was, indeed, of so gracious and tender a nature, although possessing, as became a princess of high degree, that touch of queenly dignity which seemed but to add to her charms; and she rode so fearlessly and so often—as princesses did in those simple times—among her father's people, that there was scarce a man or woman or child of the city who had not seen her, and on whom at some time or other her kindly, gracious smile had not lighted. For in those days kings and queens and princesses reigned in the hearts of their people, and knew much of their joys and sorrows, and rooted their thrones, it might almost be said, in the hearthstones of their subjects.

King Ulphius had reigned wisely and well for nearly a quarter of a century, and, being a man who loved peace better than war, and who liked rather to hear the hum and busy clatter of a prosperous city about him than the clash of arms, had given opportunity to one man in

the kingdom to take a power to himself which no one suspected or thought seriously about. That man was Glavin, Prime-Minister and chief adviser to the King. Glavin was a man of a dark and sombre countenance, a man of much courtesy and suavity of manners; and, as the King had from time to time rewarded him for his services with gifts and honours, this man had, as the years went on, grown exceedingly rich and powerful. He had a great castle just outside the city, to the strength of which he had added from time to time; and, in the easy-going and pleasure-loving city and court, no one seemed to recognise that the men at the disposal of the Prime-Minister were greater in number and better trained and armed than those about the palace of the King. Sometimes, as Glavin sat in the King's cabinet, advising his master, the thought would come upon him that, in the event of the sudden death of Ulphius, it would be an easy thing to seize the throne and reign in Sylvania by force of arms; and this thought grew and grew with him as time went on.

Years before, when the Princess Sylvia was but a beautiful child of eleven, there had been in the palace of King Ulphius a handsome boy, of some fifteen years of age, named Gareth. This youth was the son of the King's dead younger brother; and the King, having no male issue, had decreed that Gareth should succeed to the throne. But, being a wise old man, he determined that his nephew should have an education which would fit him for so responsible a position; and, with this end in view, he sent the boy, with many letters of recommendation, on a journey through Europe, determining that he should see something of other courts and kingdoms, and their fashions and manners, before reigning in Sylvania.

Now, Prince Gareth had, even as a boy, an affection for the beautiful child, his cousin Sylvia; and the thought that they might one day be joined together and reign together in Sylvania was very pleasing to the King; and, although he had laughed at the little, innocent, childish love-making, he yet liked to see the children together, and often watched them wandering hand-in-hand in the palace gardens, or sitting silently, looking into each other's eyes in

adoring fashion, and listening to the songs of the birds and the plash of the fountains.

The little Princess Sylvia shed many bitter tears when her boy-lover started out upon his travels, for travelling was a serious business in those days; and it was a greater matter even for a prince to journey a few hundred miles than for an ordinary man in our days to go to the other side of the world. It had been arranged that the young Prince was to extend his travels as far as possible, and was to make a considerable stay in whatever country he happened to be; so that it was probable that he would not return to Sylvania for some years to come. As a matter of fact, he did not return for nine years; for, through hot-headedness, he got into serious trouble with a state which was not on the most friendly terms with Sylvania, and was kept a close prisoner for some time. So that when, after many adventures, he finally set out for his own country, his retinue had disappeared, and he travelled alone.

In the meantime the Princess Sylvia, as has been said, had grown to womanhood; the old King had left the reins of government more completely in the hands of Glavin, the Prime-Minister, who, being an ambitious man, felt that, in spite of all his power, he was not yet powerful enough.

One dark and moonless night a compact body of sturdy men-at-arms marched silently into the city, and halted at the palace gates; they were Glavin's men. The porter of the palace gate must have been in the pay of the Prime-Minister, for he let the drawbridge down without a word, and the men passed silently across, and were drawn up, waiting and fully armed, in the courtyard. Glavin sat late with the King that night, discussing affairs of State; and when the silence was broken by the tramp of the men-at-arms in the courtyard below, the King started from his seat and looked at Glavin.

'What means this noise?' he cried. 'What men are these?'

Glavin, the Prime-Minister, bowed mockingly, looking at him with an evil smile. 'The men are mine, sire,' he said. 'They come here at my bidding.'

The King smiled perplexedly. 'So great an escort, surely, is beyond the need even of the chief Minister of Sylvania,' he said.

'True, sire,' replied Glavin; 'but not too great, methinks, for the escort of the King.'

King Ulphius looked at him with a frown. 'Thy words are puzzling, Glavin,' he said. 'Explain thyself.'

The Prime-Minister came nearer to him, no longer bowing before him, but looking at him with a new and unveiled light of insolence in his dark eyes. 'This night,' he said, 'a new King sits upon the throne of Sylvania; thy course is run, Ulphius. This night thou shalt join thy sainted Queen in heaven.'

He sprang towards the King, who wheeled about suddenly, and made a dash for the other side of the cabinet, where his sword lay upon a table. But Glavin was too quick for him; he caught the old King by the throat, so that he could not cry out, and there about the room they rocked fiercely, hugging each other in that deadly embrace. Glavin was the stronger man, and younger, and he forced the old King to his knees, and then upon his back on the floor, still with that deadly grip upon his throat—a grip he never relaxed until King Ulphius lay mute and lifeless at his feet. Then he sprang across the room, flung open the door of the cabinet, and shouted to the guard:

'Quick! Bring hither the physician. His Majesty the King is ill of an apoplexy.'

The man, without waiting to hear anything further, ran at once to the apartments of the King's physician and raised the alarm; in a few moments the old man came shuffling along to the King's cabinet, half-dressed, and followed by a crowd of frightened waiting men and maids. Glavin was at the door of the cabinet, and he drew the physician within, and closed the door on the others. And the next moment the astonished man felt himself held in a grip of iron by one shoulder, with a dagger pointed at his heart.

'Cry out—and I strike,' whispered the Prime-Minister. 'Thou seest the King; look well on him. Tell me—as thou wilt tell all other men—how did the King die?'

The trembling physician felt himself drawn nearer and nearer to the body of the King and forced upon his knees by that tremendous grip.

'Look well on him,' whispered Glavin again, 'and tell me—as thou wilt tell all men—how did the King die?'

The physician knew well how the King died; he saw, as he knelt there, the marks of the cruel fingers upon the swollen throat; yet, with that dagger at his breast, he dared not speak the truth. 'His Majesty has died,' he muttered in a low voice, 'of an apoplexy, as thou hast said.'

Glavin laughed, and pulled the man to his feet. 'Go,' he said, 'and proclaim it to all men: issue a writing, which may be set upon the castle gate, that all who can may read it. In the morning I will send forth the heralds to proclaim it to the city, and to proclaim that a new King reigns in Sylvania.'

The Princess Sylvia, hearing the tumult in the castle, had run quickly to the door of her apartments, fearing that something had happened to the King, her father; but at the door stood two strange men-at-arms, whom she had not seen before about the castle, and who barred her way.

'What means this?' she asked haughtily.
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'There is a noise and clamour of tongues within the castle. I would seek the King, my father.'

But they told her doggedly enough that they had orders that she was not to leave her apartments; and, greatly wondering, she went within again, and waited, trembling, with her ladies all about her.

Presently a heavy step sounded in the outer room, and Glavin came in and stood before her—not bending, as he had been wont to do, to kiss her hand, but standing there, looking at her grimly and in silence. There was a long pause before he spoke.

'Send thy ladies from thee, Princess,' he said sternly; 'there is trouble in the palace, and I would speak to thee alone.'

She waved her hand to dismiss the women, and then stood watching him, with all her nerves strung to the keenest tension to hear his news, to understand his strange behaviour. He came to the matter in hand brutally enough.

'The King is dead,' he said.

She started, and clasped her hands, and took a step towards him, looking at him with wild eyes.

'Dead!' she breathed. 'I left the King, my father, well but an hour since. Ah! let me go to him; let me see him. He loved me; there is a chance that he may wake again at the voice of my love. Let me go to him.'

He put his hand up to stop her, shaking his head.

'Stay,' he said. 'Thou must not see the King now; the physician is with him, and his attendants.'

She drew herself up, and stamped her foot imperiously, even though her eyes were swimming with tears. 'Thou forgettest,' she said, 'the obedience due to me. I am the daughter of thy King; I demand to see my father.'

'And I refuse to grant thee leave to see him. I owe thee no obedience now; a new King reigns in Sylvania, and I am that King.'

She started back from him in astonishment.

'Thou the King!' she cried. 'If my father is dead, and Prince Gareth is not here to claim his own, then will I hold the throne until the Prince comes to take it. Thou dost most strangely abuse the position the King, thy master, gave thee.'

'Might rules stronger than all else at such a time as this,' cried Glavin, laughing. 'Thou shalt rule in Sylvania; but thou must rule with me. This is no time for tender speeches or honeyed words; long have I desired thee, Sylvia, even as I have desired the throne thy father filled. Now that throne is within my grasp, and thou and I will rule together.'

She shrank from him, terrified and appalled at his audacity.

'Thou mayest wrest the Princess Sylvia's kingdom from her; thou shalt not seize the Princess Sylvia also,' she said.

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Glavin caught her suddenly by the wrist and looked into her eyes.

'Who is to aid thee?' he cried fiercely. 'My men-at-arms far outnumber those of the dead King, and are stronger; the palace now is within my grasp, and to-morrow the city of Arboream shall hear the new King proclaimed. See'—he caught her hand and ruthlessly wrenched a ring from one of the slender fingers, and held the glittering thing up to the light—'see, here is thy ring, to proclaim to all men that thou art plighted to Glavin, King of Sylvania.'

'Give me my ring,' she cried hoarsely. 'Tis not mine to give. Prince Gareth placed it on my hand nine long years since, in token of his boyish love for me. Give me my ring again.'

'Twill better serve, then,' said Glavin, laughing. 'Prince Gareth comes no more; but thou shalt reign in Sylvania with a worthier mate. Thou art my prisoner here until such time as thou shalt choose to ride through the city with me on thy bridal-day.' He slipped the ring on his little finger, turned on his heel, and went out of the room.

He had reached the King's cabinet again—from which the body of the dead King had been removed—and was pacing up and down there, when one of his men came hurriedly to him, and told him that a young man waited outside the castle, demanding admission.

'Who is this man?' asked Glavin, pausing in his walk, and frowning upon the messenger.

The man was a stranger in Arboream, being a soldier of fortune who had come there only within the past year, and knew nothing of former events.

'He cries that his name is Gareth,' said the man, 'and that he is a prince returned after much wandering to his uncle's kingdom again.'

Glavin started, and came hurriedly across the room and laid his hand on the fellow's mouth.

'Hush!' he whispered. 'Speak not so loud. Has this prince much following?'

'He rides alone, sire,' answered the man.

Glavin considered for a moment, and then turned again to the man.

'Admit him silently,' he said; 'show him much courtesy, and bring him hither to me at once. And, above all, tell no man of his arrival, or thy life shall pay the penalty.'

CHAPTER II.

THE FIGHT ON THE HILL-TOP.



LAVIN paced up and down the cabinet for some minutes before the sound of footsteps warned him that his visitor was approaching.

He stood calmly, with a smile upon his face, until the door opened; and then, as the young Prince appeared on the threshold,

he advanced quickly, dropped gracefully on one knee before him, caught his hand, and carried it to his lips.

'Thou art right welcome home again, my Prince,' he said; 'so many years hast thou travelled that I should scarce have known thee. Thou left us a stripling; thou comest again in the pride of manhood—and crowned, I warrant me, with doughty deeds. But thou comest at an evil time.'

The young Prince started.

'Of what evil dost thou speak, Glavin?' he cried. 'Surely no harm has come to my uncle the King, or to my sweet cousin the Princess. Tell me quickly of what evil thou speakest.'

'Sire,' said Glavin, with much humility, 'my lord the King is dead; he died but an hour since, in this very room, of an apoplexy. The Princess Sylvia is confined to her apartments, overwhelmed with grief at the death of her father; and I alone am left to welcome thee. The Princess, who knows of thy coming, hath begged that she may not see thee to-night; in the morning she will greet thee.'

'Tis grave news indeed,' said the Prince. 'I would have given much to have seen my uncle the King alive. I have journeyed far, and with what speed I might, since I made my escape from prison. And now I return but to find the King dead, and my sweet cousin plunged in grief. I would see the King, Glavin.'

Glavin shook his head sadly. 'Tis not a sight that thou shouldst look upon,' he said. 'Wait rather till the physician and the women have done their duties, that thou mayest see him in the glory of death, even as thou didst know him in the glory of life. Let me urge upon thee, Prince, to get thee to thy chamber, and leave us this sad night alone with our grief. Thou hast need of rest; to-morrow thou must be hailed as King of Sylvania, according to thine uncle's decree.'

Prince Gareth was unwilling at first to accede to Glavin's wishes, but he finally went to the chamber set apart for him, and, without undressing, flung himself down upon his couch, to think of all these strange new happenings in the kingdom of Sylvania.

Left alone, Glavin lost no time in thought; he hurriedly summoned the captain of his men-at-arms, and held a long and private talk with him. It was a time for desperate measures, if he would carry out his purpose, and Glavin was not the man to shrink from anything to which he had put his hand.

Thus it happened that, long before daybreak, Prince Gareth was startled from his sleep by a rude hand laid on his shoulder, and started up to find six men fully armed about his couch. His sword had been taken from him, and he stood there unarmed, at their mercy.

'The King would speak with thee,' said one

of the men when he hotly demanded an explanation of the intrusion.

'The King!' he cried. 'The King is dead: how, then, should he summon me?'

'There is a new King rules in Sylvania—King Glavin. 'Tis he who summons thee.'

'Glavin is mad,' cried the Prince; 'the events of this night must have disturbed his reason. I go not at any such bidding.'

But they caught him roughly, all unarmed as he was, and, despite his struggles, forced him from the room, and along the passages of the castle to the King's cabinet; and there, firmly held, he stood defiantly before Glavin, who was seated, looking at him with a smile.

'I told thee, Prince, thou camest at an evil time,' said Glavin. 'To-night the King has died; to-night the kingdom of Sylvania is mine. Thou hast tarried too long upon thy travels. I have not played so deep a stake to have it snatched from my grasp by a boy.'

'There can be but one king in Sylvania,' cried the Prince, hotly, 'and that king is King Gareth, by my uncle's decree. I come in time to claim my own; to fight for my own, if need be.'

'And I tell thee, fool, that thou art too late. Within an hour or two the heralds shall proclaim King Glavin, and my men shall force the proclamation home at the pike's point, if force be needful. Listen to me'—he leaned forward in his seat and scowled at the young man—'no man in Arboream knows of thy coming here to-night; no man shall know of thy going. Within an hour thou shalt pass from the city, strongly guarded; within an hour thou shalt die, and leave King Glavin to reign over the kingdom of Sylvania. 'Twas a madness indeed, Prince, to venture into thy loyal kingdom unattended; thou shalt leave it attended well enough. Six men shall go with thee, without the city wall, and there, in a lonely place that has been selected, they shall murder thee, and fling thy body into the heart of the wood; so mutilating thy fair beauty that any who may chance to find thee shall but say thou art a poor gentleman, unknown, killed by robbers for what gold thou didst chance to have in thy pouch.'

'Thou wilt not dare to do this thing,' cried Gareth; 'the city of Arboream would rise in its might against thee.'

Glavin shrugged his shoulders. 'The city will not know,' he said. 'Thou camest here when men were fast and snug in their beds; thou goest out before they wake. I dare all things in such a cause as this. To-morrow it will be proclaimed in the streets of Arboream that King Ulphius died of an apoplexy; it may be well to tell thee—thou who talkest of men not daring—that the King, thine uncle, died at my hands; that I choked out the useless life from him, as I would choke out thine if it served my humour to do so.'

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The Prince sprang forward with a cry of rage ; but the men-at-arms gripped him firmly, and, though he struggled fiercely, he could not get at the man.

'Listen again,' went on Glavin calmly. 'Thou didst think to come back here to thy kingdom, and claim thy cousin Sylvia for thy queen. She shall yet sit upon the throne of Sylvania—not as thy queen, but mine. We long have loved ; and this night, even since her father's death, she did plight her troth to me.'

'Thou liest,' cried the Prince. 'The Princess Sylvia would not mate with such as thou.'

Glavin laughed, and held up his hand, on which the ring glittered. 'Wilt thou believe that?' he asked—the ring thou gavest her, thinking to keep her faithful to thee. Women are ambitious, even as men are ; and when a kingdom holds the balance against love, love is a feathery thing indeed, weighing nothing in the balance. Thy kingdom and thy bride are mine, Gareth, and thou art nothing from this hour.'

Long before daybreak the six men marched out of the silent city, with Prince Gareth in their midst ; he walked with bowed head, like a man from whom all dear delights of earth have been swept away ; he scarcely seemed to care, in that terrible hour, whether he lived or whether he died. The men, keeping sternest watch upon him, marched on with him out of the city, and right on to the crest of a hill, from which, looking backwards, the city could be seen just springing into morning glory in the coming sunrise ; on the other side before them was a rocky broken declivity, covered with rough and tangled woods. And at the brow of the hill the six men halted.

Now, it happened that one of the six was the soldier of fortune who had come running to Glavin with the news of the young Prince's arrival. He was a wild, daring, and reckless fellow, scarred from many fights, and a man of whom it was currently said among his comrades that he feared neither God nor man. Yet he had a passionate admiration for bravery in any shape or form ; and although he knew, like the good soldier he was, that a soldier's first duty must be obedience, he loathed the work now before him. To stand in fair and open fight with any man, be the issue what it might, was a fair and a glorious thing, whether the quarrel be a matter of the wine-cups or a woman's dark eyes ; but to slaughter a man—outnumbered by six to one, and unarmed—in cold blood was a very different matter. This man, whose name was Gobeno, determined that, so far as he was concerned, he would have nothing to do with the killing of a brave and honest gentleman who could not defend himself.

The men halted, as has been said, at the top of the hill, and suddenly caught at their weapons ; and then the lust of life swept over the Prince, and he drew himself up, and looked round upon

them, defenceless though he was, like a tiger at bay. And, while he looked round, Gobeno the scarred edged a little nearer towards him.

Suddenly Gareth pointed hurriedly to the city.

'See!' he cried ; 'what meaneth that light upon the castle towers?'

There was no light upon the castle towers ; but the men, taken off their guard, swung round to look. Gareth sprang forward like a panther, and struck one of the fellows full under the ear, catching his sword from his hand as he fell ; and then, with his back against a tree, he swung the heavy weapon in his hand, and held them at bay.

'Now, strike, ye varlets,' he cried, 'and ye shall see how a Prince can die. 'Tis five blades to one. Now who is he that will first taste cold steel?'

Then Gobeno swung his sword aloft, sprang to the side of the Prince, and faced round there with him ; and two swords were levelled against four. 'I do not side with butchers,' he shouted, 'nor stand by while an honest gentleman fights for the life God gave him. Come, Sir Prince ; let's have at the rogues!'

Gareth took heart of grace indeed then, for, though they were still two to four, he knew the strength and subtlety of his own wrist, and the man who had ranged himself beside him looked like a fighter ; besides this, the men themselves, who had expected no such strange turn of events, held back for a moment. The Prince sprang at the foremost of them, and drove his heavy sword straight down through the fellow's skull, so that he fell back, lifeless and horrible, amongst his fellows. Another man made at him fiercely ; and Gareth, driven backwards for a moment, dropped suddenly upon one knee, and thrust up at the man under his guard with all his strength ; the sword went clean through his lungs, and he fell heavily, groaning. Meanwhile Gobeno had not been idle ; he had struck at one man so fiercely that the fellow's sword dropped from his grasp, shivered at the hilt ; he turned and dashed off down the hill after the man who had been disarmed in the first instance ; and the last man, after a few futile passes, fairly turned tail, and raced down the hill after them.

Gobeno was for setting off after them, but the Prince called him back. 'Let us spill no more blood,' he cried hastily ; 'rather let us look to our own safety. If those fellows reach the city, within an hour a score of them will be hunting us. We have fought against desperate odds, thou and I ; if we stay here now I must surely be slain, and thou, good fellow, wilt hang in the market-place.'

'Have no fear, Sir Prince,' replied Gobeno, laughing. 'They dare not carry back the tale that one unarmed man was a match for six sent out to murder him ; if thy death be of such value to my late master, they will not

dare to say thou art still alive. Rest assured we are safe from pursuit.'

Prince Gareth leaned upon the sword he held, and looked down at the dead men and at the blood-stained ground; then he raised his eyes, and looked back down the hill at the city of Arboream, with the sun just gilding its roofs.

'I am a Prince—nay, a King without a kingdom. My love is false to me; my kingdom wrested from me by a villain. To return there would be a madness. How can I, with my single arm, fight against Glavin and his army? Henceforth I have no kingdom; henceforth there are none to fight my cause.'

Gobeno dropped suddenly upon one knee, and bared and bent his head.

'Nay, say not so, Sir Prince,' he cried, 'for if thou wilt but take me, I will fight thy cause till all causes are alike to me and I fight no more. Even in these times brave men are hard to find, and I—a poor soldier of fortune—do dearly love a losing cause, where the odds are desperate and a man sleeps with his hand to his sword-hilt. Take me, Sir Prince, and I will serve thee faithfully.'

'And never Prince had better squire,' cried Gareth. 'In desperate straits men find what stuff their fellow-men are made of, and find, maybe, their truest friends. How do they call you?'

'By many strange titles at times,' said the fellow, laughing; 'some scarce fit for ears polite. But my name is Gobeno.'

'Come, Count Gobeno,' said the Prince, raising him from the ground, 'thou hast chosen a sorry cause, methinks; but thou and I will stand together in it, whatever it may be.'

And so the Prince and the soldier of fortune left Arboream far behind, and fared forth into the world together.

Gobeno's words proved to be true; for the men who should have killed the Prince, returning to the city, told Glavin a wonderful story of how the Prince had turned upon them, snatched the sword, and fought lustily for his life; of how he had killed three of their number before they found it possible to disarm and despatch him; and added that he lay dead in the little wood, and that they purposed returning that night and burying him in secret with their slain comrades.

'Truly a dangerous fellow,' cried Glavin, laughing grimly. 'But a man-at-arms or two is no great thing; return after nightfall, as ye have said, and hide all traces of the slaughter.'

So they came back at night to the hill, took up the bodies of the two dead men, carried them into the wood, and buried them there; and they said nothing further about the matter, for fear of Glavin.

Thus King Glavin held the throne of Sylvania, and Prince Gareth was an exile and a wanderer in strange lands.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW KING.



ING GLAVIN was duly proclaimed by the heralds through all the streets of the city of Arboream and in the market-places of the smaller towns of Sylvania. At first the people were indignant and surprised; but they knew the power of this man, and the heralds were everywhere accompanied by strong bodies of men-at-arms, so that the people dared not cry out against the usurper—dared not even murmur. But in their own homes they fell to whispering about the strange doings at the palace, and to wondering what was to become of their beloved Princess Sylvia, and what part she would take in the new kingdom.

Once a bold fellow, a blacksmith in the city, cried out against the man who had seized the throne, and raised a shout for Queen Sylvia; he was seized, and carried before the King. And the next morning, when the people came out of their houses at daybreak, they drew into shuddering groups and pointed at a fearful thing in the market-place. For there, on a gallows fifty feet high, swinging in the wind, was the body of the blacksmith. It seemed to poison the very air of the fair city as it hung there. But after that no man dared to cry out against the King; they only hated him in secret, and kept close within their houses when he rode forth in all splendour through the city; there were no more joyous shouts and acclamations, as in the days of King Ulphius.

One day Glavin caused proclamation to be made throughout the city that in two months the Princess Sylvia, who had plighted her troth to him, would be wedded to him, with much pomp and ceremony, in the Cathedral of Arboream. It may readily be imagined with what feelings the people received the tidings; they felt that even their beloved Princess had turned against them, and had cast in her lot with a man they detested and feared. Of course the Princess knew nothing of this; the proclamation had been made without her knowledge. But that day Glavin paid a visit to her apartments, wherein she had been kept a close prisoner, and announced to her what he had done.

'This day,' he said, 'the heralds have proclaimed to the people of Sylvania that in a month's time the Princess Sylvia becomes the bride of the King; all preparations for the nuptials are completed. I am a man of my oath: thou shalt reign with me in Sylvania, even as I have said.'

The Princess Sylvia turned upon him with flashing eyes.

'I will go with thee to the Cathedral,' she
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cried, 'only if they carry me thither on my bier. Thou wilt not dare to force me to such a thing as this; the people of Arboream love me, and they will rise up against thee if I do but cry to them.'

'And the people of Arboream fear me,' he said, with a laugh—'which is a much greater thing. Pikes and swords pierce men's hearts more quickly than women's cries. I tell thee thou art powerless here.'

'I wait for my Prince,' she said presently. 'He will surely come soon, and will hurl thee from the throne, and take his own again.'

King Glavin burst into a roar of laughter. 'Thou wilt not see thy Prince again,' he said; 'thy Prince is dead.' Then, as she started suddenly towards him with her hands clasped, he added:

'Thy Prince came hither on the very night thy father died, and I, fearing that he might stand in my way, had him sent to join his uncle. There is but one Prince in Sylvania; I am that one. Wilt thou not be reasonable, my Princess? All these things have I dared for thy sweet sake. Wilt thou not grant my prayer? The power is mine, and yet I stoop to plead with thee.'

The Princess Sylvia, be it remembered, lived in strange and stirring times, and during the past few days, whilst kept a close prisoner, had had time to debate within herself on all these matters, and to endeavour to find, with her keen woman's wit, some method of escape. Her whole soul revolted at the man who stood before her; she seemed to see his hands dyed red with the blood of her boy-lover. And yet, with all the woman's soul within her strung to meet the demand, she determined, knowing her own helplessness, to match her wit against that of the man, and to gain by feminine cunning what she could not gain by prayers or strength. And she began to play her part from that hour.

She turned her beautiful sad eyes fully upon him, and then bowed her head. 'It is as my lord the King desires,' she said. 'I am but a woman; yet I fain would be a queen, and 'tis meet that a woman should bow herself before her King. I loved my Prince, although he was but a boy; but thou, by strangest fortune, dost hold the kingdom of Sylvania. I will do thy bidding in a month from this.'

Then, as he moved quickly towards her, she put up her hand imperiously, yet with some slightest show of archness, and stopped him. 'Stay,' she said; 'if I concede so much, I have the right to claim something from thee. I claim that thou shalt not demand from me any slightest privilege until the holy Church confers it on thee; and I claim my freedom from this hour.'

King Glavin looked at her somewhat ruefully for a moment; but he was well contented with so easy a victory. 'Thy claim is granted,' he said slowly; 'but thou must not go beyond the

palace grounds. Thou shalt see enough of thy beloved people,' he added, with a slight sneer, 'when thou art Queen of Sylvania. Thou art free to go or come as thou wilt, through the palace and its gardens.'

Then he turned on his heel and left her; and from that time the guards were taken from the door leading to her apartments, and she was free to come and go as she would. She certainly made the best use of her liberty. She found many opportunities of speaking to those of her father's people who still remained about the palace; and from them she learned something of all that had been happening in Arboream. She learned that already new taxes had been made, and new tax-gatherers appointed; that the good, prosperous days of her father's reign were fast being forgotten before this new reign of tyranny which had sprung up. She heard that the people, so far from going about their business with songs and laughter, crept about the city silently and in trembling; that old punishments and penalties, long since fallen into decay, had been revived, and new ones added. And she grew to hate the King with a deeper hatred even than before, because she loved her people.

One night the Princess Sylvia crept out into the grounds of the palace, and wandered there listlessly alone. One week of her month of freedom had gone by, and she was already beginning to cast about in her mind for some way of escape from the terrible fate which threatened her; yet the more she thought about it the deeper grew her despair. And, thinking thus, she came to a little gate which led from the gardens of the palace into the city—a gate little used. As she went towards it a man sprang up out of the shadow and barred her way.

Now, it is quite certain that when the Princess first drew near the gate she had no slightest thought of passing beyond it; yet the mere fact that a guardian had been sent there to prevent any attempted escape was sufficient to rouse in her mind a sudden passionate desire to pass beyond the portals into the city. In part a feeling of bitter resentment at the injustice of her captivity, in part a coquettish desire to match the strength of her beauty and her wit against Glavin's more brutal forces, actuated her; without the slightest hesitation she advanced quickly, as though she did not see the man, and stumbled almost into his arms. He held his pike across the door, and she drew back in apparent blushing confusion.

'I did not see thee, good fellow,' she said. 'The night is dark, and men do not usually start from the shadows, even at the bidding of a princess. What dost thou here?'

'I stand here by order of the King,' replied the man in a low voice. For the sight of this fair and dainty Princess, in her white robe,

in the sombre night-time, with the wondrous beauty of her face so near to his as she spoke, was an enchanting and a disturbing vision; he grasped his pike more firmly, and drew himself stiffly upright.

The Princess stood, with one hand lightly leaning against the heavy masonry of the wall, looking at him with a musing smile.

'And thou hast orders,' she said slowly, 'that the Princess Sylvia shall not pass beyond this gate?' She laughed a low, musical, rippling laugh, and drew a little nearer to him. 'And so they fear my might and power so greatly that they set strong men, with stronger weapons, to guard the gates against me. Truly I had not known that men did fear me so!'

'Tis the King's orders,' said the man again; but he held his pike a little more easily, clasping it lightly with both hands, and letting it rest against his shoulder.

'But surely no man of strength wants arms against a woman,' she said, smiling up at him still. 'Nature gave him arms to hold a woman if he would, or keep her from him. A brave man levels not his pike at a woman's heart. His arms could hold her did she but battle with him.'

The man laughed, but said nothing; he shifted his position a little, and taking the pike loosely in one hand, rested the other on his hip.

'Truly, I seek not to escape,' she said in the same low, almost caressing voice; 'for if thou stoodst there without thy pike, and I did come against thee, thou couldst hold me with thine arms so long as it pleased thee.'

'Truly I could,' said the man, laughing again—'if I but dared to hold a princess at all,' he added.

'A princess is but a woman, after all,' she said, looking at him steadily. 'See, good fellow, set down thy pike against the door there, and I will come at thee, as if to escape, and thou shalt prove that thou canst hold me.'

The man set his pike against the wall and stood there, with his hands resting lightly on his hips, facing her. She drew herself back for a moment, and then made as if to run at him; but as his hands were stretched out to hold her she swerved suddenly, caught up the pike, sprang back against the wall, and levelled it at him.

'Come no nearer, on your life!' she cried; and they were no longer the alluring eyes of the woman which faced him, but the imperious eyes of a queen who would have her way. 'It is my purpose to go to-night into the city; within an hour, before the guard comes round, I will be at the gate here again. Thou shalt not suffer for this service; I will fill thy hands with gold. But I go to-night into the city; unbar the door.'

He fidgeted about, at the length of the pike,

watching her uneasily; but she stood there sternly defiant, and he dared come no nearer. 'Give me the pike, Princess,' he said. 'I dare not unbar the door.'

'Then will I slay thee, fool, and take my way into the city at my leisure;' and she made at him so fiercely with the pike that he dropped suddenly upon his knees.

'Nay, I will unbar the door,' he cried, 'if thou wilt return within the hour.'

'I have said it,' she replied haughtily. 'And each night, while it is my pleasure, I will pass through this gate, and will come back again within the hour. Unbar the door.'

The fellow rose slowly, went to the door, and threw it open; the Princess slipped through backwards, still facing him, with the pike levelled. Then, as she stepped outside, she suddenly flung down the pike with a clatter on the stones, and gathering up her robes in her hand, shot off down the street, and was lost in the darkness. The man stood looking after her for a moment, shaking his head; then he picked up his weapon, re-entered the garden, and fastened the door again.

The Princess Sylvia took her way through the city, unrecognised by any; the streets were dark, and she slipped along in the shadows, keeping out of the way of any groups of people she happened to pass. So for three nights—for but an hour on each occasion—she took her way through the city, her heart filled with grief at the silence and the gloom about her, relieving often with her bounty women and children, with hunger-pinched faces, who begged from her—a new sight indeed in Arboream; and at such times she drew her veil swiftly about her face, that none might know her.

There lived at this time in Arboream, in one of the poorer quarters of the city, a certain mysterious witch, held in superstitious dread by the simple-minded people, and much resorted to by love-sick youths and maidens for her fortune-telling powers and for her love-philtres. One night the Princess, wandering through the city, came upon the witch's dwelling, and made up her mind to consult her as to her own future and as to the possibility of her escape from the hated thralldom which seemed about to be put upon her. With her heart beating a little more quickly than usual, she veiled her face and tapped at the door. There was no response; listening intently, the Princess could hear the faint and mournful mewing of a cat, and could see a bright light shining through the partially curtained window. She knocked again, and then, growing impatient, pushed open the door and entered the place. It was a great, square, lofty room, with a brazier burning in the centre; the scented smoke from this floated in great wreaths about the roof. At one side of the room a curtain was suspended, and a great chair and a table stood near this. The cat—a great,

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black, fierce-eyed creature—was trotting ceaselessly in a circle round and round the brazier; and on the floor, wriggling its slow length towards where the Princess stood, was a horrible snake, its beautiful scaly skin glittering in the light.

The Princess called softly; and then, obtaining no reply, more loudly. The cat came slowly towards her, and rubbed itself, purring, against her robe; the snake stopped, and reared its head, looking at her out of its wicked eyes. But no witch was there. The Princess searched all through the place, even drawing back the curtain and peering behind it, but found nothing. The witch had gone, leaving nothing behind her to indicate the reason for her departure. Whether, as the Princess thought long afterwards, the old woman had wandered out, and, in the darkness of the night, had toppled into the river which ran near at hand, and so had been carried down by the swift current and drowned; or whether she had fled from the place in fear of threats which had been used against her; or what the mystery of her disappearance was, it is impossible to say. Suffice it that she never appeared in Arboream again.

And while the Princess stood near the brazier, wondering about it all, and irresolute what to do, there came a sudden loud knocking at the door. Princess Sylvia looked round for a way of escape, but saw none; she knew she dared not be found there, and perhaps recognised; and in an instant she had caught up a long thick veil of silk stuff, covered with cabalistic characters, which lay on the table, and had flung it completely over her head and face. Then, springing to the middle of the room, and standing behind the brazier, she cried to the person who knocked to enter.

CHAPTER IV.

A WONDROUS WITCH INDEED!



HE door was slowly opened, and a man came in, whom Princess Sylvia, peering through her veil, recognised as a man of the city, a tanner who carried on a small business in a little street just off the market-place. The man started when he saw the tall and queenly figure of Sylvia standing erect behind the brazier, in place of the bent and wrinkled hag he had expected to find.

'Truly, thou art no witch,' he said bluntly as he looked at her.

The Princess smiled behind her disguise.

'Tis the best proof that I am a witch,' she said, 'that I can change my shape at will. What is thine errand?'

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The man hurriedly crossed himself, and muttered something under his breath.

'The King,' he said at last, 'hath put new taxes upon us, and I, a poor man, cannot find the wherewithal to pay them. To-morrow, at noon, the tax-gatherer will seize my leather and the tools wherewith I earn my living if the money be not forthcoming. Tell me, if thou canst, how I may pay this sum, and how I shall avoid that which will surely bring me to beggary.'

The Princess opened the little pouch which hung at her girdle, took from it some gold pieces, and held them out to the man.

'Will this suffice, good tanner?' she asked.

The man hesitated for a moment, and looked at the gold doubtfully; then he eagerly took it, testing each piece between his teeth. The Princess laughed.

'Tis good gold,' she said; 'I have no fairy gold here, which turns to dead leaves when the sun rises. Pay thy taxes with that, and rest content.'

The fellow, with a profusion of thanks, tucked the money into his breast, and stumbled out of the place. The Princess, with a merry laugh, flung aside her veil, extinguished the brazier, and went out, and through the city streets, back to the gate in the wall of the palace garden.

But the adventure had taken a hold on her imagination; mystery is at all times precious to a woman, even though she be a princess, and she liked the thought that she was able, in secret, to do some good for the people she loved so well. And so it happened that, night after night, she went to the witch's house, and took her stand there behind the lighted brazier, with the folds of the veil concealing her features, and received the people who came to her. Now it was a girl, weeping because her lover was faithless; and with gentle words she cheered the poor creature, and sent her on her way, bidding her send the lover to her. And, with sternest rebuke, she would take the youth to task, showing him the wrong he had done, and in most cases contriving to bring those who really cared for each other together again. Now it was a mother who brought the child she loved to this most gentle witch, praying that she would heal it of the deadly sickness which had come upon it, and crying that she was too poor to seek a physician. Then would Sylvia, with gentle words and loving hands, and with such simple herbs and remedies as she found in the witch's place, minister to the needs of the ailing little one, so that it smiled up fearlessly at the veiled lady, and in many cases recovered of its malady.

Gradually it came to be known that this was no ordinary witch, such as the people had been accustomed to, but a great and gracious creature, the very tones of whose voice inspired hope in trembling hearts, the very touch of whose white

hands carried benediction ; and night after night, in the short hour the Princess stayed there, the crowds who visited her became greater, and the wonder and the mystery of it spread through all Sylvania.

Quite unconsciously, too, the Princess Sylvia was doing another thing : she was fighting against the power of King Glavin. For when she heard a tale of injustice or wrong she cried out bitterly, in scorn of the man who could thus oppress the people she loved ; when, with her gold or her gentle charity, she could undo some deed of his, she did it. All-unconsciously, too, by her deeds and by her words, she fought against the power of the King, and roused the people yet more against him. She felt that there could be no injustice in that, for the kingdom he held was her own, and she had the right to gain it if she could. So great became her power at last, and so great the love of the simple people for her, that there were a vast number in the city of Arboream who would gladly have laid down their lives at her bidding ; who would gladly have fought, at her command, against the usurper they knew she hated as fiercely as they did. There was, too, a sort of superstitious worship of her in their minds ; they dared not think who this wondrous creature could be, who came before them for but an hour each night, and then vanished again.

It came to the ears of the King at last, and although he scornfully mocked at her power, he yet was troubled ; there were so many strange rumours afloat in Arboream in regard to her. One night he rode out through the city, alone and unattended, with his heavy sword buckled at his side.

'I fear no witch,' he said, 'and if I do but find her I'll silence her mischievous tongue for ever, and show these idle vagabonds who believe in her that even a witch, with all her devilish arts, is powerless against the King.'

It was a dark night, and the King drew up his horse within sight of the witch's door, and watched the people coming and going. At last, as he sat there, he saw a white figure, with a veil wrapped round the face, steal out of the door and flit away through the darkness ; he whipped out his sword, dug his spurs into his horse, and raced off after her. The Princess would certainly have fared badly, but that as she ran she came to a narrow alley leading up between some houses, at the end of which two posts were set, that carts might not be taken through that way ; she slipped between the posts, and sped down the narrow lane with the speed of a deer. It took the King some time to get off his horse, and to secure the animal to one of the posts ; then, brandishing his sword, he also dashed down the lane in hot pursuit. But when he reached the farther end the white figure had vanished. He searched in all directions, but could find nothing of her, and at last

returned to his horse, and mounting, rode slowly back to the palace.

But even this adventure did not daunt the Princess ; she knew the man with whom she had to deal, and she knew her own power over the people. She felt that he dared not take open measures against her, for fear of a riot in the city. So she went again and again, and yet again, to the witch's house, and the people still flocked to see her.

It is now the duty of this chronicle to turn to the adventures of Prince Gareth and Gobeno. At first the Prince had made up his mind that he could not, in any case, return again to Arboream ; his kingdom had been stripped from him ; he was regarded as one dead ; and his love was false to him. He determined at first to journey again into other countries, and to endeavour to forget his unfortunate visit to Arboream. But after a time better thoughts than these grew up in him ; his love for the fair country of Sylvania beat down all other feelings ; and, after wandering irresolutely and in disguise for but a short time, he turned his steps again in the direction of the city.

'Tis but a coward's act, Gobeno,' he said, 'to turn tail and flee away when one is beaten ; let us go down again to Arboream, make our way into the city, and lie in hiding there. It may happen that fortune shall favour us ; that it may be given to us even yet to fling this usurper down and wrest the kingdom from his grasp. Besides, there is another matter. He confessed to me that he killed my uncle ; and even though I die myself, yet shall I not rest content until I have snatched the chance to kill this villain.'

Gobeno felt for the hilt of his sword, and laughed gleefully.

'Tis but tame work here, Sir Prince,' he cried ; 'and 'twould be a merry jest indeed, and a goodly ending, if we be caught like rats in a trap, to set ourselves back to back in the marketplace and fight till we could fight no longer. A man is scarce a man that whips not out his blade once a day at least ; and I like not this hiding and dodging. Mine is a carcass made to be carved. A little blood-letting never hurt any man yet.'

The Prince laughed.

'We will pray, good Gobeno, that the chance for a fight may come ; but we must hide and dodge, as thou sayest, a little longer, until our chance comes.'

Thus it happened that, late one night, two men—the one disguised as a student, the other looking like a stout and honest fellow from the country—entered the gates of Arboream, and sought a lodging in one of the smaller houses in a poorer part of the town. The student appeared to live but for his books, never leaving his room during the day, and going out only at nightfall,

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accompanied by the countryman. They attracted no attention, and lived there quietly for some days. At last one night Gobeno, who had been going about the city in his disguise, and had overheard some talk at a tavern, came in and told the Prince of the strange rumour regarding the witch.

'Men say, Sir Prince, that she is beautiful, although they never see her face; and she hath a voice like softest music, and is able to do all things that may be asked of her. The King is mightily enraged about her, and sought the other night to kill her, they say. He dares not to set out openly against her, because of the people; her power over the people is very great.'

'Tis strange that this woman should have come to fame so quickly, and have gained such power that she may almost defy the King,' said the Prince. 'I have no faith in witches; they are but ancient crones, who impose upon those weak enough to believe their mutterings. But a beautiful woman, who draws all people to her, and helps them with her bounty and her gentle deeds, is a strange witch indeed, Gobeno. There is a thought in my mind that she might help us—might tell me something of what my future fortune is to be.' He sprang up hurriedly, his face full of determination. 'I will seek her this night, Gobeno, and learn something of this fair mystery.'

'Shall I come with thee, Sir Prince?' asked Gobeno.

The Prince laughed and shook his head. 'There is no need for fighting to-night, Gobeno,' he said. 'There is naught to fear in a woman, even though she be a witch.'

As the Prince went out Gobeno muttered to himself:

'I have not found it so, Sir Prince; better a dozen blades levelled at you, and your back against a rock, than one glance from a woman's eyes.'

CHAPTER V.

THE WITCH AND THE STUDENT.



HE Princess had dismissed the last of her visitors that night, and was preparing to set out for the palace, when there came a hurried knocking at the door, which was then thrust open, and Gareth stood on the threshold. The face of the Princess was still concealed by the heavy silken veil, and Gareth, glancing quickly at her for a moment, doffed his cap, and advanced into the room. Travel had altered the Princess's boy-lover, and nine long years had gone by since she had parted from him tearfully; moreover, she had been given to understand that he was dead. So that it is small wonder that the Princess knew nothing of the name or station

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of her visitor, even though she looked at him keenly; she saw only a tall and handsome youth, in the garb of a student.

'I am a stranger in Arboream,' said the Prince, 'having only come to it within these past few days. But I have heard much of thy fame, and of thy good deeds among the people of the city'—

'And thou hast come to me that thou mayest learn more,' said the Princess quickly, looking at him curiously from behind her veil. 'There are many in Arboream who would gladly learn more of me; yet all I send from me, leaving them no wiser than they came. In what shall I serve thee?'

The Prince hesitated. He could not tell this woman his name, or what had brought him to Arboream; he could not tell her that he was a prince, supposed by some to be dead, by others to be still wandering in other lands. He had not thought of this before; he began to blame himself that he had come at all; and, seeking a way out of the difficulty, a gallant answer sprang to his tongue, and he uttered it:

'Men say that thou art beautiful,' he said; 'that no withered crone hides beneath that veil, but a woman whose loveliness is greater than the loveliness of the women of this world.'

'And thou hast come,' she said, 'with the idle thought that thou mayest look upon this beauty at which men only guess. Thou hast come upon an idle errand; go back again, and trouble me no more.' Yet she looked upon him wistfully as she spoke, as though almost fearing that he would do her bidding.

He bowed, and turned as if to leave her.

'Tis an idle errand indeed,' he said in a low voice, 'and I am justly punished. Yet, now I have heard thy voice, I know that what men say is true; that thou art beautiful above all other women; such a voice as thine could issue only from lips that are perfect. And the lips, I warrant me, do but fittingly match other features as beautiful. Lady, I crave thy pardon.'

But the Princess was loath to let him go; strange dim memories stirred in her heart; she had received no such visitor as this, and her heart trembled at the thought that he might go, and come no more; trembled, too, at the thought that he might not, after all, look on the beauty he had so accurately judged, and with so fine a sense; trembled a little too, perchance, that he might misjudge those features, and count them something less, in their perfection, than they really were. So that she stopped him with a gesture of her hand.

'Thou sayest thou art a stranger in Arboream?' she asked.

'I have been away from the city for many years,' the Prince replied, 'and have returned but these three days since.'

The Princess raised her hand to her veil, and then paused.

'I charge thee,' she said, 'that thou dost tell no man of the privilege I grant thee.' Then she slowly raised the veil with both hands, let it drop on the floor beside her, and stood looking at him across the flaming brazier. And, because women change greatly in their growth to womanhood, the Prince did not know who stood before him. He was silent for some moments, looking at her with undisguised admiration.

'In all my journeys,' he said at last, 'I have not seen so fair a face. I have not thought so much beauty could be centred in one woman. But why callest thou thyself a witch?'

She smiled upon him then, looking across the leaping flames somewhat archly.

'Am I not a witch?' she asked in a low voice.

The Prince moved slightly nearer to her. 'A witch indeed,' he said; 'and 'tis well, perchance, for men's peace that thou shouldst veil thy face.'

'And what of thy peace?' she asked, laughing.

'My peace is gone for ever from this night,' he answered, bowing low before her.

She dismissed him only when it became imperative that she should return to the palace. When he was gone she veiled her face, and sped away through the streets, lightly humming a little song to herself.

On the following evening, for the first time during her strange adventures at the witch's house, the people who thronged to her seemed somewhat tiresome, and she was glad when the last of them departed; and when she heard the knock upon the door which warned her the student was there, she flung the veil from her face, crossed the room, and opened the door herself. The Prince stepped in, and all the weariness was gone from her face, and her eyes smiled gladly and frankly at him. Each night became in time a long weary vigil, each day so many toilsome hours to be got through, until that one hour should come again wherein she would meet him. She grew to talk to him of the people she loved, and of all she tried to do for them; and when he saw the throng about her door his admiration grew for this gentle lady, who could do such deeds in secret.

She sat in the great chair one night, looking down at him with soft eyes, where he reclined on the floor at her feet.

'Tell me thy name, most gentle student,' she said.

But the Prince dared not do that. 'I am but a poor student,' he said, 'and my name is nothing, and would signify nothing to thee. But I would crave to know what they call thee, most gentle lady.'

She shook her head.

'I, too, must be nameless,' she said, 'or my power among men might be gone for ever.'

'Tell me, then,' he went on more eagerly, 'hast thou no kindred?'

She shook her head again.

'None,' she said.

'Thou art so beautiful a mystery,' he said, looking up at her wistfully, 'and thou comest here for but one hour out of all the weary day and night, and but a little time even of that hour thou givest to me, that I scarce know sometimes whether thou art spirit or mortal woman. Thou comest flitting through the dark streets to this place, when the city is hushed in silence; thou vanishest away again, and the darkness swalloweth thee up.'

'I am in very truth a mortal woman,' she said softly; and he felt her warm breath upon his forehead. 'See'—she stretched down one white hand to him—'there is firm flesh here.'

The Prince caught the hand between his own and raised it gently to his lips.

'Thou art dear mortal woman indeed,' he cried, 'and I seek to know no more of thee. The day is not lost when I can look into thine eyes for but a little time, or feel thy fingers clasping mine. Dear lady—for I may call thee by no other name—wilt thou not let me pass with thee through the dark streets at night, and see thee to thy dwelling, lest any should harm thee?'

She shook her head again, looking down at him with a smile, and still winding her white fingers about his own.

'None will harm me,' she said softly, 'and thou mayest not follow me. And why,' she added, looking at him out of her half-closed eyes—'why shouldst thou seek to protect me? Is there no other woman to whom thy thoughts may turn?' Yet she clutched his fingers a little more tightly as she spoke.

'Dear lady,' said the Prince, 'the world, however wide it be, seems to hold no other woman; there is but one face I see in my dreams, and that face is thine; there is but one voice I hear, through all the watches of the long night, and that voice is thine.'

It has been said that the power is given to a woman to read a man's heart long before a man, in clumsier fashion, may read a woman's; and so it happened that the Princess Sylvia knew well all that was in the poor student's heart, and had seen it growing there, through the few days that she had known him. And although, being a princess, she should have known that princesses mate not with poor students; yet, being a woman also, she knew that no man she had seen could sway her as this man could, and that, even though he left her to-night, never to return again, no prince of all the kingdoms of earth could be to her what this simple student was. And, greatly as she had loathed the King before, and much as she had dreaded being given to him, she knew now, when love had come to her, that she would die any death rather than go to his arms.

'Dear lady,' cried the Prince again, 'thou

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knowest well that I love thee; and even though I am but a poor student and canst not even tell thee my name, and even though I have no wealth nor power among men, still can I dower thee with a greater love than man hath ever felt for woman before; still canst thou make me rich indeed, above all the kings of earth, if thou wilt but smile upon me.'

He was kneeling before her now, with her white hands held against his breast; and all her imperious rank and power were swept from her by the torrent of her love; she was but a woman, who loved this man, and she bent to him, and put her arms about his neck, and drew him near her.

'Most sweet student,' she said—'for thou wilt give me no other dear name by which to call thee—I love thee, even as thou lovest me. There is no kingdom that I crave, nor riches, save the kingdom of thy love; there is no martial music of all the armies under heaven that can stir me as thy dear voice stirs me. Hold me to thy breast, dear love, and whisper to me all that is in thy heart and mine.'

There was a sudden loud knocking at the door. The lovers started to their feet, Gareth clasping the Princess; and then, after a pause, the knocking was repeated, more loudly than before.

'Open,' cried a voice; 'it is the King!'

The Princess clung to her lover in dismay. 'It is the King,' she whispered. 'He will surely slay thee if he finds thee here with me.'

The Prince stared at her in amazement.

'Not for that would he kill me,' he said, not understanding her; 'but for another reason. Yet will I see this King,' he muttered to himself between his set teeth; 'perchance the hour has come at last.'

He strode to the door and flung it open, and King Glavin stalked in and looked round the place, not seeing the Princess at first, for she had drawn back into the shadow; nor did he see the Prince, for he had brushed rudely past him on entering.

'I come to seek this accursed witch,' cried the King, as he stood, a splendid figure, with his robes sweeping about him, and his jewelled crown upon his brows. 'No longer shall she pester me with her vile seditious tongue. Stand forth, thou hag, and let me see thee!'

The Prince had run swiftly across the room to the side of the Princess, and they both stepped out together into the light of the brazier. The King started back with a cry.

'I am the witch thou seekest,' cried Sylvia.

'Thou the witch?' cried the King, pointing at her and frowning heavily. 'The Princess Sylvia turned witch! What madness is this?'

The Prince had started violently on hearing the Princess's name; and then suddenly the King's eyes lighted upon him, and for one long moment they stared at each other without speaking. Then the King took a half-step forward, and peered at the Prince.

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'Is this witchcraft indeed?' he cried hoarsely. 'Can the dead spring to life again; or who art thou that masqueradeth in this shape?'

The Prince looked at him grimly.

'Thou knowest me well enough, Glavin,' he said, 'and all thy arts have not prevailed against me. The blood of a murdered man cries out on thee this night; and here, with naught to aid thee save the blade thou hast so oft befouled, thou standest face to face with me at last. Nay, turn not to the door—'tis barred; and thy servants, seeing thee enter this place, and fearing for their very souls, have fled. Put off thy crown, Glavin.' The Prince whipped out his sword, and made a quick cut at the King's head, so that the crown fell from his brows and went rolling and spinning across the floor. 'And put off thy kingly robe, else it may cumber thee. Come; must I slay thee where thou standest, or wilt thou defend thyself?'

Glavin glanced hurriedly round him, and saw in an instant that there was no prospect of escape; then, gathering his courage, he flung off his robe and drew his sword, and with a cry made at the Prince.

The Princess crouched back in a corner, looking on with terror, and yet with admiration as she saw the strength and subtlety of this man she had regarded but as a simple student. For from the very first the Prince forced the King to act warily on the defensive, driving him by the ardour of his attack round and round the room, with his mouth grimly set and his blade playing like lightning round the King's head. Both Prince and King fought desperately, for each knew that no aid could come to them there, and that one of them must fall before the battle ceased. At last the King, growing weak, contrived to come near the door, and raised his voice in a lusty shout for help; but the Prince, with a cry, beat him away from the door, and renewed his attack even more fiercely than before.

'Coward,' cried the Prince, 'that canst not even fight alone, or murder with thine own hands, save old and feeble men.'

And he sprang at him, beat down his guard, and sent his sword crashing with all his force down into Glavin's skull; so that the King pitched forward on his face, and lay dead on the floor.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRINCESS CHOOSES.



LL that night Gareth sat beside the dead King, with his sword across his knees, while the Princess slept calmly in the inner chamber, across the entrance to which the curtain was drawn. And in the morning he was startled by a great tumult outside the doors, and the

shouts and cries of a multitude of people. For strange rumours had gone about in the city that night—started first by the servants of the King, who had fled when he entered the witch's house. It was rumoured that the King had gone to the house of the witch, and had been seen no more; that men passing near had heard the clash of steel and the cries of men who fought. Then another rumour spread that the King was killed, and lay in the house of the witch, and that none dared go near. Still a third rumour sprang up, more disquieting than all others. For it was found that the Princess Sylvia was missing, that she had been absent from the castle all night, and that no man or woman in all the city had seen aught of her.

So, filled with wonder and fear and curiosity, the people came flocking to the house of the witch, and there found the door barred and all silent within. Presently, growing impatient, some of the bolder spirits broke open the door; and there, facing them, with his sword drawn in his hand, was a young student. And, in a confusion of many voices, some cried out to know what had become of the King, some cried for the witch, and others demanded the Princess Sylvia.

Now, the Princess Sylvia, who had been aroused by the clamour, knew well the power she had over these people by reason of the deeds of charity she had performed; she knew that she could sway them by the superstitious love they had for her, so that she flung the heavy silken veil over her head, and came out and stood beside the student. And the people fell back from before her, clinging to each other, and whispering, 'It is the witch! It is the witch!' She raised her hands above her head in token for silence, and spoke to them.

'Bring me a horse,' she said, 'and let me ride from this place, and I will show thee your Princess.'

'The King! The King!' cried some again; and she raised her hands once more for silence.

'The King is dead,' she cried, 'and to-day the Princess Sylvia shall reign upon the throne of Sylvania. Let me show her to you.'

Then a great shout went up amongst the people; for they had hated and feared the King, and there was no man there that did not rejoice that the Princess Sylvia was to reign over them. And they brought the King's horse—for the animal had been standing throughout the night where the King had left it near the witch's house—and the young student bent on one knee, and assisted the Princess to mount the horse.

'I will hold thy bridle,' he whispered, 'and guide thee through the people.'

So they set slowly out through the city—the poor student leading the horse, and the witch, as the people still called her, closely veiled, riding amidst them all—the people flocking

about them, and the crowd increasing as they went, until, when they came at last to the great market-place, the market-place itself and all the streets which ran into it were filled with a moving, curious crowd of men and women. There, as the horse was halted, and she looked round upon them all through her veil, they raised a great shout: 'Show us the Princess Sylvia, as thou hast said. Show us the Princess Sylvia!'

She raised her arms suddenly and swept the veil from her face, then looked round upon them with a smile. And as they fell back from her, murmuring and wondering, she cried out in a clear voice:

'Witch and Princess both, my people. I came among ye because of my love for my people, and because I dared not to come openly.'

Then the tumult raged about her more strongly than ever when the people came to understand all that she had done; men pressed to her, and kissed her robe and her shoes, and even the buckles of the harness of the horse she rode; women lifted up little children to see this wondrous Princess, who had done so great and strange a thing out of the love she bore her people. And, crying her name to the skies, and shouting and leaping and thrusting each other along, they came to the palace, and, with the poor student still holding her bridle-rein, swept with her across the drawbridge, and into the great courtyard of the castle—or as many of them as could be crowded into its space. Then the student lifted the Princess from her saddle, and, bowing low before her, led her into the great hall of the castle, where all the officers of state were gathered. Some, too, there were who had been her father's advisers, and had been thrown from their positions by Glavin; all these had assembled there to welcome her back to her kingdom again.

The Princess rose before all the people, and spoke to them in that clear, soft voice they had learned to love when she had spoken to them in the house of the witch.

'There are many things,' said the Princess, 'of which I need not speak. When ye sorrowed I sorrowed too; and now that I rejoice ye shall rejoice too. I have come again into my father's kingdom, even as he would have wished; and the man who snatched my throne from me is dead, and will trouble us no more. He kept me prisoner here; and last night he sought me out, when I had escaped, and this gentleman who stands beside me now did draw his sword in my protection and kill the King. There shall be no more hungry men and women in Arboream, and in all Sylvania there shall be no more sorrowing hearts.'

Then the Prime-Minister of the late King—who had yet at all times been secretly loyal to the Princess Sylvia—stepped forward. His name was Bleoberis.

'A Princess never yet hath sat upon the
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throne of Sylvania,' he said; 'and good King Ulphius decreed that Prince Gareth should wear the crown. But the Prince is dead; and even as our beloved Princess reigneth already in the hearts of her people, so shall she reign in very truth as Queen of Sylvania.'

Another great shout went up among the people; and the Prince, who had been standing silently apart, drew near, and dropped on one knee before the Princess, and put her hand to his lips. For the Prince, as he stood there and heard the people cry her name, had fought out a hard battle with himself; and though the victory was with the right, it yet had the bitterness of death in it. For he knew that he had been absent from his kingdom for nine long years, and that the people knew nothing of him; he knew too that, as Bleoberis had said, the Princess had long reigned in the hearts of her people. 'She has lived with them, wept with them, suffered with them; the kingdom is rightly hers,' he thought. 'Gareth the Prince is dead, and no man mourns for him now. I knew not that she was the Princess Sylvia when I wooed her. Gareth the Prince is dead; only the poor student lives, and must take his way alone.' All this the Prince had thought as he stood near her; and now, as he knelt before her and put her hand to his lips, he bade her farewell.

'Sweet Princess,' he said, 'thy poor student hath been indeed favoured in being able to do thee some slight service; and he craves that thou wilt bear him gently in thy remembrance when he is gone far from thee. Gentle words have fallen from thy lips that I would not, if I could, forget; thou hast come into thy kingdom again, and hast no further need of my services. Farewell, sweet Princess!'

But the Princess suddenly laid her hand upon his shoulder and stopped him.

'Stay,' she cried; 'thou shalt not go like this.' Then she bent a little nearer to him, and lowered her voice. 'Were all thy words false, then?' she whispered.

He looked up at her with reproachful eyes.

'Nay, sweet lady,' he murmured; 'the words were spoken from my heart. But between a princess and a poor student there is a great gap; and so I can but kiss thy hand, and carry my sorrowful heart alone away from thee.'

'Stay,' she said again; 'there is a word that I must speak to the people here.' Then she raised her head, and looked round upon the people, and her voice rang out clear and firm.

'It hath been said,' she cried, 'that no princess ever yet sat upon the throne of Sylvania; and I, dearly as I love my people, am but a weak woman, and dare not to reign alone. Surely a princess hath the right to choose a consort for herself; surely she hath the right to say what man shall claim her hand and hold her kingdom with her.'

This mightily pleased the people, who cried
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out, clapping their hands, that she should choose herself. And then, smiling round upon them all, she took the poor student by the hand, raised him up beside her, and spoke again.

'This, then, my people, is the man to whom the heart of your Princess is given; this the man she decrees shall sit upon the throne of Sylvania with her, as her lord and king.' And she took the hands of the student, bent suddenly towards him, and kissed him before all the assembled people.

A great silence then fell upon them all; and presently murmurings broke out, and they asked one another who this man was, and why the Princess had chosen a poor stranger for so great an honour as this. Bleoberis, the Prime-Minister, was the first to voice the tumult.

'The choice is thine, Princess, as Queen of Sylvania, to choose for thyself a consort; but he must be a worthy man, and a noble. Who is this man?'

The Princess flashed round upon him, still holding the student by the hand.

'Thou art indeed bold,' she cried, 'even to think that the Princess Sylvia would choose a consort who was not worthy and who was not noble. To this gentleman my heart is given; for princesses love, even as peasants. Last night he slew the King, and saved me, and gave me back my kingdom; to-day I claim him, by right of our love for one another.'

'Nay, Princess,' said Bleoberis, somewhat testily, 'thou dost not understand. This gentleman may be all that thou hast said, and still be unfit to mate with thee. For kings are not made from students, however bold and goodly-looking they may be; and no man here knows who this gentleman may be, or aught about him. Princess, thy kingdom is thy first care, and thou must choose again.'

The Princess stamped her foot angrily, still holding the hand of the student.

'I have chosen,' she said; 'and no other man reigneth in Sylvania with me but the man to whom my heart is given.'

'But thou dost not even know his name,' cried Bleoberis.

Then the poor student stepped suddenly forward, and raising his hand, spoke to the people for the first time.

'Listen,' he cried. 'My name is Gareth, and I am indeed your Prince. Nay, sweet Sylvia, start not away from me so wildly, for indeed I speak truth. I came to my uncle's kingdom on the night that Glavin murdered him.'

'Murdered him!' cried Sylvia. 'What dost thou mean?'

'I speak but the truth,' cried the Prince. 'Glavin himself, when I was a prisoner in his hands, confessed the deed to me. Fearing that I might wrest his kingdom from him, he had me taken at night to the hill-top beyond the city there, unarmed, and guarded by six men,

who had command to kill me. But by the generous aid of one honest fellow, whom I see in the crowd before me now, I escaped out of their hands, killing two of them. Then for a time I wandered round about Sylvania, and came back, and met the Princess in the strangest fashion, not recognising her; and I wooed the Princess when I knew not her station or name, and she thought me only a poor student. And now, but for her love for me, I would have gone away again, leaving her to reign in peace over the people who love her; but she hath claimed me by virtue of our love, and so I claim the kingdom with her.'

The Princess Sylvia had fallen upon her knees before the Prince. 'Dear Gareth,' she said, 'I knew not indeed that thou wert the Prince. I pray thee, take thine own again, and reign in the kingdom, as my father decreed.'

The Prince stooped quickly and raised her, and put his arm about her.

'We reign together in Sylvania, thou and I,' he said, 'or thy poor student leaves thee to reign alone.'

And the people, seeing them thus together, raised a great shout of 'Gareth and Sylvia! King Gareth!' And Gareth and Sylvia, looking down upon the multitude, knew that they had, in very truth, come into their kingdom.

So, in the end, the kingdom of Sylvania was restored to prosperity, and Prince Gareth and the Princess Sylvia reigned together as King and Queen in Arboream; and the short tyranny of Glavin the Usurper was forgotten. Gobeno fought no more; the King did not forget the promise the Prince had made, and his faithful servant was ennobled, to the general joy; and, although Gareth would have been glad to raise him to higher power, in gratitude for his devotion, he steadfastly refused all offers of promotion. But he lived about the castle for many years, and attained to a great age, and is reported to have been a great favourite with the princes and princesses who, as the years went on, made the old castle merry with their childish laughter.

THE NEW YEAR.

'A GOOD New Year, with many blessings in it!'
Once more go forth the kindly wish and word.
A good New Year! and may we all begin it
With hearts by noble thought and purpose stirred.

The Old Year's over, with its joy and sadness;
The path before us is untried and dim;
But let us take it with the step of gladness,
For God is there, and we can trust in Him.

What of the buried hopes that lie behind us?
Their graves may yet grow flowers, so let them
rest.

To-day alone is ours, and it must find us
Prepared to hope afresh and do our best.

God *knows* what finite wisdom only *guesses*;
Not here from our dim eyes the mist will roll.
What we call failures He may deem successes
Who sees in broken parts the perfect whole.

And if we miss some dear familiar faces,
Passed on before us to the Home above,
Even while we count, through tears, their vacant
places,

He heals our sorrow with His balm of Love.

No human lot is free from cares and crosses,
Each passing year will bring both shine and
shower;

Yet, though on troubled seas life's vessel tosses,
The storms of earth endure but for an hour.

And should the river of our happy laughter
Flow 'neath a sky no cloud yet overcasts,
We will not fear the shadows coming after,
But make the most of sunshine while it lasts.

A good New Year! Oh, let us all begin it
With cheerful faces set toward the light!

A good New Year, which will have blessings in it
If we but persevere and do the right.

E. MATHESON.



THE CHETWODE HEIRLOOM.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

There is some goodness of soul in things evil.

—SHAKESPEARE.



THE London season was nearly over, and the ranks of society were becoming thinner day by day; but there were still enough persons of distinction left in town to render the Countess of Senlac's garden-party an unqualified success. The guests numbered about a couple of hundred, and the scene was a gay and brilliant one.

The weather was oppressively warm, and Lady Chetwode, one of the guests, who was suffering from a headache, was glad after a time to find an unoccupied seat apart from the crowd in the shade of one of the large cedars for which Grove Royal is famed. Although she had played her part to perfection, and had seemed as light-hearted and free from care as any one there, in reality she was in no mood for festivities of any kind. A week before, Scrope Manor, her husband's country seat, had been broken into, and among other things stolen was a valuable diamond necklace—a family heirloom which had come down to Sir James Chetwode from his great-grandmother, and was prized by him accordingly.

Sir James had blamed his wife, rather unjustly as it seemed to her, because after the Drawing-room, which she had gone to town to attend, she had not 'at once'—and he had not failed to emphasise the words—returned the necklace to the family banker to whose custody it was entrusted between one occasion of its being wanted and another. After the Drawing-room she had carried the necklace back with her to the Manor, intending next day to take it in person to the bank; but something had intervened to hinder her from doing so, and in the course of the following night the house had been broken into and the heirloom stolen. Really, she could not see that she had been very much to blame; but Sir James chose to think otherwise.

Although a week had gone by and the police seemed helpless in the matter, the Baronet, who was naturally of a stingy disposition, refused to offer any reward, great or small, for such information as would lead to the capture and conviction of the thief or thieves or the recovery of the missing property. 'If my doing so would avail to restore the necklace, I would not hesitate for a moment,' he said in his acrid way. 'But I am quite sure it has been broken up 1899.]

long since and the stones dispersed. And as for the conviction of the rascals, however gratifying it might be to see them in the dock, two or three hundred pounds is too big a price to pay for such a pleasure as that.'

But so far as Lady Chetwode was concerned, there was a secret in connection with the stolen necklace known only to herself and one other person. Were the secret in question by any chance to come to the knowledge of her husband it would be enough to cause a lifelong breach between them. As she sat there in the shade of the cedar she was very unhappy.

In age she was about five-and-thirty, and she still retained in all their perfection those graces of person, combined with that rare charm of manner, which, some ten years before, had succeeded in capturing the somewhat fastidious affections of Sir James Chetwode.

But, heavy at heart though her ladyship was, it would not do for her to sit and mope there in solitude; and she was on the point of rising and rejoining the gay throng on the terrace, when her intention was arrested by the approach of a stranger who, in leisurely fashion, was crossing the lawn in a straight line towards her. Before he reached her she had time to take note of his appearance. In age he was probably about sixty, but his figure—so compact, wiry, and active did it seem—might have been that of a much younger man. His moustache, short pointed beard, and close-cropped hair were all snow white; but his eyebrows looked as if they might be dyed. He had regular features of a rather commonplace type, but their expression—or so it seemed to her ladyship, who prided herself on her skill as a physiognomist—was that of a man who was at once resolute and wily, who was as cunning as he was unscrupulous, and who would stick at nothing in order to gain his ends. He was irreproachably dressed, carried an expensive orchid in his button-hole, and was wearing a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles. Such as he was, her ladyship had no recollection of having ever seen him before. Most likely he had mistaken her for some one else.

The stranger halted within a few feet of her, lifted his hat, and bowed courteously. 'Have I the honour of addressing Lady Chetwode?' he asked.

'That is my name.'

'Pray, pardon the question, which I assure your ladyship is not dictated by idle curiosity;

but was not Sir James Chetwode's mansion broken into about a week ago and much valuable property stolen?'

'Such, unfortunately, was the case.'

'The greatest loss of all being that of a magnificent diamond necklace which, according to the newspapers, had been in the family upwards of a century?'

Her ladyship was sitting bolt-upright by this time. The stranger's question had touched her hidden sore.

'Your information is quite correct, sir,' she said in her iciest tone. 'But may I ask'—

'One moment, if your ladyship pleases. Should I be far wrong in assuming that both yourself and Sir James are greatly put about by the loss of the necklace, and that your ladyship especially would be prepared to make almost any sacrifice for its recovery?'

Lady Chetwode's cheeks flushed suddenly, and then paled as quickly. There seemed a certain amount of apprehension in the way she was now regarding the man before her. After a momentary hesitation she said, 'Such a question on the part of an entire stranger is nothing less than an impertinence, and I must decline to discuss the matter with you.' She rose and would have moved away; but the stranger held up an arresting hand.

'*Arrêtez vous, madame, je vous prie.* As already remarked, my questions are not prompted by idle curiosity. Listen. What would your ladyship say if I were to tell you that it is in my power to restore the necklace to you—on certain conditions?'

Her ladyship sank into her seat again. It seemed as if her limbs refused to support her. For a few moments speech failed her. Then, with an evident effort: 'I should say, sir, that you were indulging in a very sorry jest.'

'A jest? Not a bit of it,' replied the stranger, with a short, harsh laugh. 'On the contrary, I was never more serious in my life. To put the matter simply and concisely: I beg to assure your ladyship that I—*moi qui vous parle*—am in a position to restore the missing necklace, on certain conditions—or rather, on one condition only.'

'Which is?' queried Lady Chetwode faintly.

'That in exchange for the article in question your ladyship shall pay me the sum of five hundred pounds.'

There was an even longer silence than before.

'And what if I refuse to do anything of the kind?'

'In that case the persons in whose possession it is will be under the painful necessity of returning the necklace to Sir James, with a polite note to the effect that, as the stones composing it are only paste, it is not worth retaining.'

A death-like pallor overspread Lady Chetwode's face. For a few seconds she looked as if she were on the point of fainting. The

stranger's keen slate-blue eyes seemed to scintillate through his spectacles as he stood looking down upon her. A grim, hard smile, which his moustache served to accentuate, curved his lips. This woman, beautiful and well born, was in his power, and he enjoyed the sensation.

With a supreme effort Lady Chetwode pulled herself together. 'I can decide upon nothing just now,' she faltered. 'Five hundred pounds is a very large sum, and I see no means—none whatever—of raising it.'

'For all that, if I may venture to say so, I think it would be advisable that your ladyship *should* find the means of raising it,' answered the stranger meaningly. 'But here comes Sir James,' he added next moment. 'I am desirous of making his acquaintance, and must ask your ladyship to introduce us. Nay, I insist upon it. I am Captain Luard—don't forget the name—an old friend of your father.'

Lady Chetwode's training as a woman of the world, which had rarely been put to a severer test, stood her in good stead. She went forward to meet her husband, putting up her rose-coloured sunshade as she did so, the warm tint of which effectually neutralised the pallor of her features.

The Baronet was a plain-featured, somewhat pragmatical-looking man of fifty, with a tall, lean, loosely-knit figure, and a slight stoop of the shoulders. His manner was dry and precise, but he could be courteous enough when he chose to unbend. He had the air of a born bureaucrat, and might have been swaddled in red-tape. Such men are nearly always self-opinionated and stand-offish; that they should be popular would be too much to expect. At bottom he was kind-hearted, just, and upright, and his good qualities were known to, and duly appreciated by, his wife.

'My dear,' said her ladyship, 'you must allow me to introduce Captain Luard to you—an old friend of my father who has lived much abroad of late years, and whom I have not had the pleasure of seeing since before our marriage—Captain Luard, my husband.'

Sir James bowed as if he had a hinge in the back of his neck. 'I am pleased to make the acquaintance of any friend of the late Mr Jellicoe, for whom I always entertained a very sincere regard.' And with that he proffered three chilly fingers.

The Captain took them and bent over them as though he appreciated the favour that was being shown him. 'I have long desired the honour of an introduction to one with whose political principles I am in such hearty sympathy, and whose parliamentary career—cut short for a brief time only, I sincerely trust—was always followed by me with unfailing interest.'

Sir James sniffed and smiled, a little fatuously as it seemed to his wife. Poor man! flattery so

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seldom came his way that he might be excused if the incense smelt sweet in his nostrils.

'And now I will leave you together,' said her ladyship. 'The dear Countess will be wondering what has become of me; and besides, I am dying for a cup of tea.'

She nodded and smiled impartially at both of them, and then moved slowly away with that graceful, gliding motion which was one of her characteristics.

Sir James, who was hot and a little tired, sat down in the cool shade of the cedar and took off his hat. How it came about he could not afterwards have told, but presently he found himself launching forth on one of his favourite hobbies—that of prison reform. It was gratifying if somewhat surprising to him to find that his new acquaintance was as enthusiastic on the subject as he himself was, and that, so far as the minutiae of prison life and discipline were concerned, he seemed considerably the better posted up of the two. He quite agreed with Sir James that the poor prisoners were much too hardly treated, and that both as regarded the food supplied to them and the labour exacted from them a radical reform was imperatively called for.

So impressed was the worthy Baronet with Captain Luard's many pleasant qualities (leaving out of question the evident respect with which he listened to the other's enunciation of his political views) that before they parted he invited him to make one at a little dinner-party at his house in Berkeley Square which he was arranging for that day week. It was an invitation that was accepted as frankly as it was given.

Not till a quarter of an hour after the two had shaken hands and gone each his own way did Sir James miss his gold repeater. It was indeed exasperating to have the fact brought home to one in such an unpleasant fashion that not even at a strictly select party like that of the Countess of Senlac was one safe from the attentions of the ubiquitous pickpocket.

Lady Chetwode heard the news of the loss of her husband's watch with a gush of dismay. Somehow she could not help connecting it in her mind with the presence of the man who called himself Captain Luard. Had her husband and he not met would not Sir James's repeater—a birthday presentation from his tenantry—have been still in his pocket? A person who was able to restore her stolen necklace, as this pseudo-captain avouched himself to be, might well be deemed guilty, the circumstances being such as they were, of this minor and more commonplace theft. But even if he were in no way implicated in the loss of the watch, he must be a person of peculiar antecedents and connections, or he would not have been in a position to say what he had said to her. Such being the case, by what occult means had
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he succeeded in obtaining a card of invitation to the Countess of Senlac's garden-party? That, however, was a question Lady Chetwode was unable to answer. She had overheard a remark to the effect that mingling among the guests were a couple of private detectives—a fact which served to deepen the mystery of the affair.

But the dismay with which she heard the announcement of the theft of the watch was as nothing in comparison with the chill fear that gripped her heart when Sir James said to her:

'You will be pleased to hear that I have given your father's old friend an invitation to dine with us on the twelfth. I felt sure it would be a gratification to you to see something more of him; and, speaking for myself, I must say that he made himself most agreeable to me. There are quite a number of questions on which he thinks exactly as I do, and he seems to possess quite a fund of information on certain subjects of much interest to me, but about which very few people, I am sorry to say, care to interest themselves. Really a superior person, and I am obliged to you for bringing us together.'

What poor Lady Chetwode murmured in reply she could not have told. For the next few seconds everything her eyes rested on seemed to be slowly rising and subsiding as though viewed from a ship at sea. A minute or two later she said a little faintly, 'I find the heat too oppressive for anything, and as soon as you are ready, dear, I shall be glad to have the carriage called.'

When Mr Jack Jellicoe, at the age of six-and-twenty, found himself 'cornered,' and in such fashion that unless within a month's time he should be able to raise the sum of seven hundred pounds he would not merely forfeit his position in society, but would render himself liable to arrest, trial, and a sentence of imprisonment, the only person to whom he could turn for help was his sister, Lady Chetwode. He had been left fatherless at eighteen, had run wild, had got through his little patrimony with a fine celerity, and had twice been helped out of monetary difficulties by his brother-in-law Sir James, who, however, on the second occasion had buttoned up his pockets and vowed he would do no more for him. Now, to crown all, Jack had floundered into a morass which would engulf him past hope of recovery unless his sister would come to his rescue, as she had done more than once already.

Lady Chetwode was several years older than Jack; and after her mother's death, which had happened when she was fifteen, a sort of semi-maternal sentiment towards the high-spirited boy had developed itself in her bosom. It was much more than a mere sisterly affection that she felt for him. He was indeed very dear to her; none the less so, perhaps, because

he had proved himself so wild and wayward, and because of late she alone had seemed to have any hold or influence over him.

Thus it fell out that when he went to her and made his wretched confession, and when she realised that without the help for which he pleaded he would be disgraced for life—and knowing, further, how useless it would be to appeal to her husband—she was like a woman driven to her wits' end. Circumstanced as she was, for her to raise the sum of seven hundred pounds was a sheer impossibility. She had brought Sir James next to no fortune, and so far as pecuniary matters went she owed everything to him. Her allowance of pin-money—which her husband deemed amply sufficient—was in reality absurdly inadequate for the requirements of a person of her social position; and as her little charities must on no account be neglected, it rarely happened that she had so much as a sovereign left in her purse at the end of the quarter. How, then, was such an impossible sum to be raised by her? She would not have known where to find so much as a fourth of it.

It was Jack who suggested—timidly and not without some inward qualms—that the amount so imperatively needed by him could easily be raised by pawning the Chetwode necklace. There would be no difficulty, he went on to observe, in obtaining at the cost of a few pounds a fac-simile of it in paste, so cleverly executed that nobody who saw it, save perhaps an expert in such things, would take it for other than the real article. It was a suggestion which by its sheer audacity first stunned his sister, and then caused her very soul to shiver with fear of the possible consequences should Sir James ever discover of what she had been guilty. In that case she felt sure he would never forgive her. But then, as Jack urged, why need he discover it? From his point of view no such danger need be feared if the affair were properly managed.

Lady Chetwode stood out for three days and then gave way. It was the one and only course open to her; and what would she not do, what risk would she not run, in order to rescue her darling brother from the black cloud of disgrace that impended over him? When once her consent had been given, she became possessed by an almost feverish anxiety to have the matter arranged and done with. She drove over from Scrope Manor to the local bank where the family jewels were deposited, and having obtained possession of the necklace, she entrusted it, not without a little natural fear and trembling, to her brother's charge.

As Jack had said, there was no difficulty about having a fac-simile of the necklace made; and three weeks later, when he placed the original and the duplicate in his sister's hand, she found it all but impossible to determine which was which. Next day the sham necklace was taken

by her to the bank, and there deposited in place of the real one. Two days later the genuine article was pledged by her at an address furnished by her brother for seven hundred pounds. Within a week Jack had sailed for the Cape.

This had happened nearly three years ago. A few months later there had been a General Election, at which Sir James Chetwode, who had been in Parliament for a dozen years, had been unseated. So extreme was his disgust and disappointment that he determined to shake the dust of his native country off his feet and go for an extended tour abroad; and both the town house and Scrope Manor were given over to the charge of caretakers, and away the Baronet and his wife went.

They had stayed abroad till the present summer, and then two circumstances had induced Sir James to retrace his steps. The first was, that an early dissolution of Parliament seemed by no means improbable, in which case it behoved him, as one who hoped to secure a seat in the new House, to be on the spot. The second was, that a favourite niece was on the eve of making her *début* in Society, and he was solicitous that she should be presented at the next Drawing-room by Lady Chetwode.

Sir James would not have been satisfied unless his wife had worn the family necklace at the function in question; but it was not without many inward tremors and misgivings that she clasped the glittering bauble—or rather, its fraudulent imitation—round her neck within ten minutes of the time she was due to leave home. The brougham was at the door, and she was buttoning her gloves, when Sir James entered the room. He surveyed her up and down through his double eyeglass with evident satisfaction; and, indeed, she made a very charming picture. Then advancing a couple of steps, he laid a finger lightly on the necklace, and said, with a pleased smile:

'How well the old thing looks! How it sparkles and seems to palpitate with hidden fire! But time has no effect upon it, and five hundred years hence it will look just as it does to-day. I had some notion of having it reset in a more modern style, but, upon my word, I don't think I can do better than let it stay as it is.'

Her ladyship breathed more freely as she went slowly downstairs.

Within fifty-six hours had followed the burglary and the disappearance of the necklace.

The evening of Sir James's little dinner-party arrived in due course. There were only about a dozen guests in all, of whom two-thirds were men. Captain Luard was nearly the last to arrive. The Baronet welcomed him with that rather frigid cordiality beyond which he never got with any one, and then introduced him to some of the other guests. That done, the Captain crossed to his hostess, whose attention at the moment of his entrance was engaged

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elsewhere, shook hands with her, and gave expression to one or two of the polite common-places customary on such occasions. He seemed entirely at his ease, and—as her ladyship could not help admitting—in his evening-clothes looked by no means the most undistinguished man there.

When dinner was announced her ladyship, to her dismay, found herself paired with the Captain, her husband having given her no previous notice of his intention.

‘As old friends I have no doubt you will find much to talk about,’ the Baronet remarked.

There was a gleam of sardonic humour in Luard’s smile as he proffered his arm and said, with a bow, ‘I am indeed highly honoured.’

How she hated and loathed the man! But she had her part to play, and must brace herself to go through with it.

At table the Captain evidently laid himself out to produce an agreeable impression. He seemed quite at home in the society gossip of the hour; he had skimmed the latest novel about which people were talking, and had made one a few evenings before at a Lyceum *première*; and, as it would never have done for her ladyship to sit mum beside him, she had to help in keeping the conversational ball rolling as best she could.

It was not till dessert was on the table that Luard said to her in a low voice, ‘By the way, in case Sir James should touch upon certain topics with me, it may be as well to be prepared. Consequently, I shall feel obliged if your ladyship will enlighten me with regard to the social position of the late Mr Jellicoe.’

‘My father was rector of Wood Overton, Midlandshire.’

‘Has your ladyship any brothers or sisters?’

‘I have one brother, younger than myself, who is now at the Cape.’

‘I am infinitely obliged. May I ask further?’

‘You may ask, sir; but I shall decline to reply to any more of your questions.’ Thereupon she rose, which was the signal to the other ladies, and a minute later the gentlemen were left alone.

Captain Luard elevated his eyebrows, showed the gold setting of his teeth for a moment, and helped himself to a few more grapes.

But he had not yet done with her ladyship. In the drawing-room, an hour later, his watched-for opportunity came. Hardly had Mr Cottesloe, the eminent banker, vacated the chair by the side of Lady Chetwode before Luard dropped into it.

‘I must ask your ladyship to spare me a couple of minutes,’ he said in cautious tones, which, however, seemed to his auditor to have a ring of menace in them. ‘Presumably I need not refresh your memory with regard to what passed between us at the Senlac garden-party. What I wish to impress upon you is that my terms remain precisely the same as 1899.]

they were then: five hundred pounds, cash down. I now find that I can afford to give your ladyship a month from the present date in which to find the money, but not a day longer. At the end of that time I shall have important business abroad, which will take me from England for an indefinite period. Here is my card, in case you should have occasion to communicate with me.’ Then, his tone changing to one of Mephistophelian mockery, he added, ‘Did your ladyship ever try to picture to yourself the face of Sir James should any one ever be cruel enough to tell him that by some strange wizardry his great-grandmother’s diamonds had been transformed into so much paste? Such a revelation would be enough to cause him to break a blood-vessel or have a fit of apoplexy. Poor dear Sir James!’

He smiled, bowed, rose, and moved away. Just then Lady Chetwode felt as if life was not indeed worth living.

The days crept on till the month specified by Captain Luard had entered its last week. Before this Sir James and his wife had left town for Scrope Manor, the family seat in Hertfordshire, where the Baronet was now confined to his room by a sharp attack of gout.

Neither to her husband nor, with one exception, to any of those about her was a change of any kind observable in Lady Chetwode. The exception in question was her ladyship’s companion, Mildred Grey, a sweet girl of twenty, whose eyes, rendered keen by affection, divined something of the torture at work below the smiling mask which was never laid aside in the presence of others. It was painful to her to have to make-believe not to see that which was so evident to her, but the existence of which it was clearly intended that neither she nor any one should so much as suspect. That Sir James should remark nothing was, under the circumstances, quite excusable. He was in almost constant pain, and consequently not in the best of tempers. His wife and Miss Grey, the latter of whom was one of his few favourites, took it in turn to wait upon him during the day, while his body-servant, Mallow, was in attendance during the night.

All this time Lady Chetwode felt as if her mind and spirit alike were being slowly hypnotised by her dread of that which the end of the month would assuredly bring to pass. She counted each day which brought her nearer the verge of an abyss from which she could discern no means of escape. That her husband, being the sort of man he was, would forgive the deception she had practised upon him when his eyes should have been opened by Captain Luard was more than she durst hope. Even if he were not absolutely to separate from her, the happy confidence in each other’s truthfulness and good faith which had hitherto subsisted between them.

would be shattered for ever. How would it be possible for him ever to trust her or believe in her again? Already the hard necessities of the case had forced her into telling several lies—she who had never lied to him before. How she hated and despised herself for having to practise a duplicity which her soul abhorred!

Very terrible to her were the long dark hours when she was unable to sleep. Sir James's somewhat exacting requirements did not allow of her dwelling overmuch on her secret trouble during the day; but all the more menacing and frightful were the colours in which her imagination painted it when her nursing duties for the time being were over, and she was at liberty to seek the solitude of her own room. More than once she said to herself, 'I will anticipate Captain Luard's action by confessing everything to my husband;' but when an opportunity offered itself for doing so her courage failed her, and she kept putting off the evil moment from hour to hour and day to day. Still, she would most likely have done so in the end had not something happened which put a wholly new complexion on the affair. We are told the darkest hour is the one that just precedes the dawn.

The fateful month was within two days of its end when Lady Chetwode received by post a packet containing bank-notes of the value of seven hundred and fifty pounds, together with a letter from her brother, in which he told her that he had been extraordinarily lucky at the diamond-fields, and had now the happiness of returning the sum which three years before she had raised at such a sacrifice in order to save him from ruin, together with an extra fifty pounds to meet the charge for interest. He then went on to remark that he had indeed turned over a new leaf since leaving England, that the last grain of his wild oats had long been sown, and that she need have no fear about him in time to come; the whole concluding with many expressions of brotherly affection.

Lady Chetwode cried over the letter, and kissed it again and again. But her tears were those of a full heart. Not more happy was she made by the receipt of the money than by her brother's news of himself. Dear Jack! She had always felt sure that by-and-by he would cast his youthful follies behind him and emerge all the stronger and better for the temptations he had gone through and overcome, and now her faith in him was amply justified.

The money had come in the nick of time. Nothing could have happened more providentially. The black cloud in which she had lived and moved for the last few weeks had lifted and vanished. Life once more smelt sweet in her nostrils. She would now be able to pay Captain Luard the sum demanded by him for blackmail, get back the sham necklace, and so escape what she dreaded more than all else—

the threatened exposure to her husband. On the other hand, the real necklace would still remain unredeemed; nor did she see any likelihood of being able to redeem it in time to come. But even supposing she were in a position to do so, in what way could she account to her husband for its mysterious reappearance? She was still far from being a happy woman. The sweet content that had once been hers seemed to have fled from her for ever.

However, the first thing to be done was to extricate herself from the clutches of the blackmailing Captain. Accordingly, next day she wrote him as follows:

'Will Captain Luard make it convenient to meet Lady Chetwode at half-past four on Friday afternoon next in the shrubbery at the end of the park on the east side of Scrope Manor, and at the same time bring with him a certain article respecting which he has already spoken to Lady C.?'

The address given her by the Captain was that of a flat at a fashionable part of the West End.

Perryfield, the station for Scrope Manor, was only a short hour's run by train from town.

Sir James's attack of gout was yielding to treatment, and Friday found him considerably better, but still somewhat irritable and inclined to be captious about trifles. After luncheon he sent Miss Grey into the village to make some inquiries at the post-office about the times of the foreign mails. When four o'clock arrived, and she had not returned, Lady Chetwode began to get fidgety. Not for anything would she have missed her appointment with Captain Luard.

When twenty more minutes had gone by she felt as if she were on tenter-hooks, and could contain herself no longer.

'My dear,' she said to her husband, 'would you mind having Mallow to sit with you for a little while till Miss Grey returns? I have a wretched headache, and feel as if I must get into the fresh air for half-an-hour.'

'To be sure—to be sure. Now I look at you, you do seem a little heavy round the eyes. I've tried you a good deal of late, I know. Yes, send Mallow to me, and tell him to bring the backgammon-board. I have given him one or two lessons of a night when I could not sleep, and at last I do believe the fellow has got some glimmerings of the game into that numskull of his.'

Five minutes later Lady Chetwode left the house, carrying with her bank-notes of the value of five hundred pounds.

The shrubbery specified in her note was at the extreme end of the park, and nearly a mile from the Manor. It was an untended wilderness, given over to the raising of young timber, with a thick undergrowth of nut-trees, blackberry-bushes, dog-roses, and brambles of many kinds. Such as it was, Sir James would not

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have it interfered with. Its unpruned wildness and luxuriance was for him its greatest charm. There was an ancient right-of-way through it from Perryfield to Garth End, which, however, was but sparingly used by the country folk. Another pathway which ran through the heart of it formed a near-cut between the Manor and the village.

Her ladyship was late, and as soon as she was out of sight of the house she increased her pace. She was very simply dressed in black, with a long gray dust-cloak for her outer garment. She had reached the shrubbery, when, on turning a bend in the path, she beheld Mildred Grey advancing with downcast eyes from the opposite direction. She had reasons for not wishing to meet the girl just then; and on the impulse of the moment, and with the certainty that she had not been seen, she stepped quickly off the path, and three seconds later was hidden from the view of any one passing behind a thick clump of undergrowth. Then she set herself to reconnoitre.

Parting the nut-bushes carefully with one hand, she was in a position to watch Mildred as, in an abstracted mood, the girl advanced along the path. But scarcely had she time to observe this before she was aware of Captain Luard, looking especially jaunty in a fashionable light suit, coming along the same path, and only a little way behind Miss Grey. It was evident that she was unaware of his approach, for when he gave a loud 'Hem!' as if purposely to attract her attention, she turned quickly with a start and confronted him.

'I crave your pardon, young lady,' he said suavely as he raised his soft hat, 'but can you inform me—I am a stranger in these parts—whether I am in the grounds of Scrope Manor, and whether this footpath will conduct me to the house?'

So close was the speaker to her hiding-place that every word reached her ladyship's ears.

'Yes, sir,' replied Mildred, 'this path leads direct to the Manor; but'— Her voice faltered and broke down, and she stood staring at the Captain with eyes which expressed as much terror as amazement. Every vestige of colour had faded from her face, leaving it white and drawn, and looking as if in the space of a few seconds it had aged a dozen years. Then her lips breathed the one word, 'Father!' and as she uttered it she seemed to shrink farther away from him.

Captain Luard reeled back as if some one had aimed a stab at him. 'What!' he cried; and in the cry there was a shrill, almost feminine, note. 'What is that you say? Why do you apply that word to me?'

'Because, although you are much changed, I recognise you for my father. It is nine years since I saw you last, but I have not forgotten you. I never could forget you.'

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Captain Luard drew a long breath, and, going a step or two nearer Mildred, peered into her face and seemed to scan her lineaments one by one. 'And you assert that you are my daughter—mine?' he said at length. 'Tell me, then, what name you were known by years ago.'

'My name was Mildred Raby.'

'And you lived where?'

'At Bellhaven. We had a house on the hill that overlooked the harbour.'

'So. And your mother, now—what has become of her?'

'I lost her eight years ago.'

'Ah! Is that indeed so? "Whom the gods love"— He turned aside his face for a moment and bit his lip. Then in silence he took a couple of turns on the short turf of the glade, a dozen yards or so back, and again confronted his daughter.

'Your mother, taking you with her, left Bellhaven by stealth one night when I was from home, and was lost to me from that time forward. Tell me, where did you go, and what became of you?'

'It was because mamma had found out something about you (what it was she never told me) that she left home, saying that she would never live with you again. We went to a number of places, but never stayed long in any of them. Mamma seemed as if she could not rest anywhere. At length we found ourselves at Perryfield, the village a little way from here, and there mamma, who had been ailing for months, was taken very ill. By that time her money was all gone, and had it not been for Lady Chetwode, who by some means had heard of her'—

'Lady Chetwode!' ejaculated Luard under his breath.

'She would have had to be removed to the workhouse, would have died there, would have been buried as a pauper, and would have left her daughter to the tender mercies of the parish. But Lady Chetwode came to our rescue. Her own doctor attended mamma during what proved to be her last illness. She was allowed to want for nothing, and when all was over— But I can tell you no more.' A sob choked her voice. Presently, controlling herself, she added, 'Surely, if you were to search the world over you would nowhere find a more generous or a nobler-hearted woman than Lady Chetwode!'

Again the Captain took a turn or two in silence.

'And what happened to you after that?' he asked. 'Why do I find you here?'

'Her ladyship was pleased to take a liking to me. She caused me to be sent to a good school, where, at the age of sixteen, I became a pupil-teacher. But when I was eighteen Lady Chetwode took me away, and since then I have filled the post of companion to her.'

Captain Luard elevated his eyebrows to their

utmost extent. 'As a rule it takes a good deal to surprise me,' he said; 'but you, my dear, have unmistakably succeeded in doing it. But tell me now—by the way, you have grown up into an uncommonly pretty young woman—are you comfortable here at Scrope Manor and tolerably happy?'

'I am both comfortable and happy.'

'That is well—that is very well. And you still think as highly of Lady Chetwode as you did nine years ago?'

'Oh! there is nowhere a woman like her. I owe everything to her, and it is hardly too much to say that, if called upon to do it, I would lay down my life for her.'

'How touching is the enthusiasm of youth!' murmured the Captain, as if to an invisible auditor. 'Hem! One more question: Are you engaged?'

The girl's cheeks flushed suddenly, and then a little laugh broke from her lips. 'I am not quite sure whether I am or not,' she said.

'Rather an unsatisfactory state of affairs, I should imagine. But who is the young man that cannot induce you to make up your mind?'

'He is Lady Chetwode's brother.'

The Captain gave vent to a low whistle. 'Another surprise for poor papa. Is the young man here at Scrope Manor?'

'No. About three years ago he went out to the Cape.'

'So! I am interested. Tell me all about it.'

'There's very little to tell. It was here at the Manor, and just before he went away, that he wanted me to engage myself to him.'

'And you refused. Why?'

'Because I felt sure that her ladyship and Sir James would both be opposed to anything of the sort. Besides, he was going abroad for an indefinite time, and I was unwilling that he should consider himself as bound by what might prove to be no more than a passing fancy.'

'But you liked him? I refrain from using a word with a tenderer meaning.'

'Yes, I liked him,' came the reply after a momentary hesitation.

'And you have not heard from him since he left England?'

Mildred's face lighted up, and again her cheeks became dashed with colour. 'I received a long letter from him only a few days ago. He has been very lucky at the diamond-mines, and says that he is on the high-road to make his fortune.'

'But surely his letter said more than that?'

Again there was a momentary hesitation. 'He says that he cares for me as much as ever he did, and that he is coming home in about three months to claim me and make me his wife.'

'It's evident to me that this young What's-hisname is a trump. You won't say "No" to him this time, of course?'

'How can I say anything else? Both Sir James and her ladyship will expect him to marry some one in a social position very different from mine; and I would not for the world that they should be forced to fail in what they thought their duty merely to humour me.'

'Will they indeed? But it is just possible there may be ways and means, such as you know nothing of, of overcoming any possible opposition on their part.' Going up to her and taking one of her hands, 'See here, girl,' he went on with a certain fierceness in his tone, 'if you really care for this young fellow you shall marry him. I pledge you my word for that. To-morrow I will send you an address from which any letter sent there for me will always reach me. Now, what I want you to promise is that if Lady Chetwode and her husband, or either of them, object to your marriage, you will at once let me know. It is not much to ask you to do, but I want your promise to do it.'

She was looking at him with a great wonder in her eyes. There was a moment's silence, and then she said, 'I promise.'

'It is well. I rely upon you,' said the Captain as he released her hand. He consulted his watch, and then he saw that his daughter was regarding him with a changed expression—one of unmistakable apprehension.

'When you overtook me you asked me the way to Scrope Manor,' she said. 'Perhaps you were going there in order to see'—— She paused, as if afraid to say more.

'Let me finish the sentence for you—in order to see Lady Chetwode. Yes, that, I admit, was my intention. But now—— Pooh! Why do you look at me with those frightened eyes?' he abruptly demanded. 'I am not a wolf and her ladyship is not Red Riding-Hood.'

His face was clouded with a frown and his lips moved as though he were arguing some point with himself. Once more he took three or four turns on the sward. Mildred watched him in anxious silence. It was evident that his words had not wholly reassured her.

Suddenly he stopped in his walk. 'Is her ladyship quite well? Have you noticed any change in her of late?' he asked.

'Her general health has seemed much as usual, except that she is troubled with insomnia, and has to resort to sleeping-draughts. But that some secret trouble has been weighing upon her mind for the last few weeks I am quite sure, although she tries to hide it from every one. It is a trouble that seems to be corroding away her life. I cannot tell you how unhappy it makes me to know of its existence, and yet to feel how helpless I am to do anything for her.'

'Hum! Then it would afford you much pleasure to see this dear lady, to whom you seem so devotedly attached, cured of the secret malady

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which—to quote your own words—is corroding away her life? Is not that so?’

‘Nothing you could mention would afford me half so much pleasure.’

‘And you would be grateful to the physician who could work such a miracle?’

‘More grateful than I could express.’

‘Well, I am that physician. Yes, you may stare; but I am speaking no more than the truth when I affirm that from to-morrow Lady Chetwode’s cure shall begin. I was on my way to seek an interview with her when I overtook you; but I have decided on a different course. Instead of seeing her I will write to her. Yes; in less than twenty-four hours from now I will send her a prescription warranted to give her back that health of mind which of late she seems to have so mysteriously lost. It is for your sake, Milly, I do this thing, and for that alone.’

Mildred had listened to him as if she could scarce believe the evidence of her ears; but at his last words her overwrought feelings gave way, and she turned aside to hide the tears she could no longer restrain. Not for two or three minutes was she able to control her emotion; and when at length she looked round it was to find herself alone. Her father had vanished. For a few seconds she stood in utter bewilderment; then she ran for a short distance along the path, this way and that, but in vain. He was gone utterly. Evidently there was nothing left her to do save to make the best of her way to the Manor.

When, a few minutes later, Lady Chetwode emerged from her hiding-place and set her face for home, she walked like a woman in a dream. Now and then she came to a stand for a few seconds without being aware that she had done so; now and then she swayed slightly as she walked. She followed the path by a sort of blind instinct, seeing nothing consciously of her surroundings. She had no sense of wonder, even, for the singular meeting of which she had just been an unseen witness. That would come later. All she was just now conscious of was that she was to be saved by some miraculous means which she did not stop to consider. ‘Saved! saved!’ was the one word that rang in her ears all the way as she walked home.

In the course of next afternoon a registered packet reached Lady Chetwode through the post, the contents of which proved to be the stolen necklace in its morocco and satin-lined case, together with the following note:

‘Lady Chetwode’s acceptance of the enclosed as an act of reparation is requested by one who, if that which he knows to-day had been known to him at the time, would most assuredly have spared her all she must have gone through in the interim. But perhaps it may be conceded
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that an act of reparation, however tardy, is preferable to none at all.’

Two days later her ladyship found that she had some business in town; but of the nature of the most important errand that took her there she said nothing to her husband.

Next morning’s post brought Sir James a registered packet containing the missing heirloom (the genuine article this time), but without a word to explain why or by whom it had been returned. The worthy Baronet’s unbounded astonishment may be more easily conceived than described. The mystery has never been solved by him, nor is it likely that it ever will be.

To Mildred Grey’s great surprise, Mr Jack Jellicoe’s declared intention of making her his wife, instead of being opposed by Sir James and Lady Chetwode, was warmly welcomed by them, and the latter made it her especial care that the bride should not go short of a handsome trousseau.

Mildred never either saw or heard from that strange being her father again, and it is hardly likely that their paths in life will ever cross each other in time to come. Neither did she ever become aware that her interview with the *soi-disant* Captain had had an unseen auditor in the person of Lady Chetwode, while her ladyship was careful to keep to herself the knowledge of the girl’s parentage which had come so strangely to her.

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

WHAT though fair Summer’s left us now,

And with her, too, have gone the flowers,
The braveries of lawn and bough,

The golden glow, the sunny hours.

Here’s Father Christmas come again!

His hair and beard are flecked with snow,

But with him comes a loaded wain

Bedecked with fairy mistletoe.

Brave ivy, too, and holly bright—

In place of Flora’s raree-show—

He brings to deck our homes to-night.

The happy children laugh and shout

As Christmas gifts are handed in,

And joyous Christmas bells ring out

Their music through the merry din.

But listen! Father Christmas speaks.

What guerdon will the old man take?

The good of all is what he seeks,

And begs that we for Christ, His sake,

Will help him drive his loaded wain

Through frost and snow and miry street

To homes where want and sorrow reign;

And by relieving others’ pain

Make Christmas happiness complete.

M. LOWSLEY STEVENSON.

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